ICS 200 – Incident Command System

Lesson 1: Course Overview

Lesson Overview

The **Course Overview** lesson:

- Provides a brief tutorial on the structure and layout of the course.
- Familiarizes you with the incident scenario and how it will be integrated into the lessons throughout the course.

This lesson should take approximately **25** minutes to complete. **Remember, you must complete the entire lesson to receive credit.**

Lesson 1 Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Use the course features and functions.
- Identify the benefits of using ICS.

Purpose and Use of the Incident Scenario

A disaster-related scenario and exercises are used in this course to help present and support the Incident Command System subject matter.

The scenario is introduced in Lesson 1 and used throughout the remaining instructional lessons and exercises.

Roaring River Flood: Scenario Introduction

Franklin is located at the northern end of the Roaring River Valley. The valley itself is one of the most fertile and productive farming areas in the State of New Liberty. Although the local farms and ranches are small by commercial standards, they afford their owners a reasonable living and a great deal of pride in their products.

This year has been particularly harsh on the Roaring River Valley. The valley is one of the most fertile and productive farming areas in the State of New Liberty. Heavy snows during the previous winter, combined with much higher-than-average rainfall throughout the spring and early summer, delayed planting and increased the local ranchers' costs for feed.

Due to heavy rains, severe flooding is now inundating the Roaring River Valley, causing widespread flooding throughout the valley. This flooding has resulted in a large crop loss and livestock fatalities and displacement. There are numerous reports of electrical and water service outages throughout the valley. The Franklin stockyard has been flooded. Several food processing plants were shut down because of flooding in the buildings.

Of special concern is the flooding of and heavy damage to a USDA fruit fly research facility. This damage resulted in the release of thousands of fruit flies—a biosecurity breach of huge proportions.

There is no relief in sight. The rain is continuing and the river is not forecasted to crest for at least 3 more days.

Roaring River Flood: Initial Assessment

The reports of widespread damage have triggered initial assessments. Initial assessments of agricultural issues have just come in.

Food Safety Inspection Service Issues

The primary area of concern is damage to and contamination of food processing plants. Initial reports indicate that five food processing plants are shut down due to flooding, which has contaminated plants, and may have damaged systems and equipment that keep food safe during processing.

Plant Protection and Quarantine Issues

Another concern is the accidental release of the fruit flies. There are a number of critical facilities located within the 81 square miles that must be regulated. These facilities include:

- 5 commercial growers that produce potentially impacted host products representing more than 7,500 acres and another 15,000 acres further downstream.
- 5 food processing plants.
- 1 fruit-packing shed.
- 1 juicing plant.
- 3 grocery stores selling host material.
- 6 nurseries selling propagative host material.

In addition, there's an unknown number of other retail establishments selling various host materials. There are no Federal/State-approved treatment facilities in the regulated area. Host material produced in other locations is routinely shipped into the regulated area for processing and/or packing. And finally, the production area will require surveying, monitoring, and regulating for a minimum of 3 fruit-fly lifecycles—at least 120 days.

Veterinary Service Issues

There have been widespread livestock losses, including:

- 50 cattle.
- 10 horses.
- 2 mules.

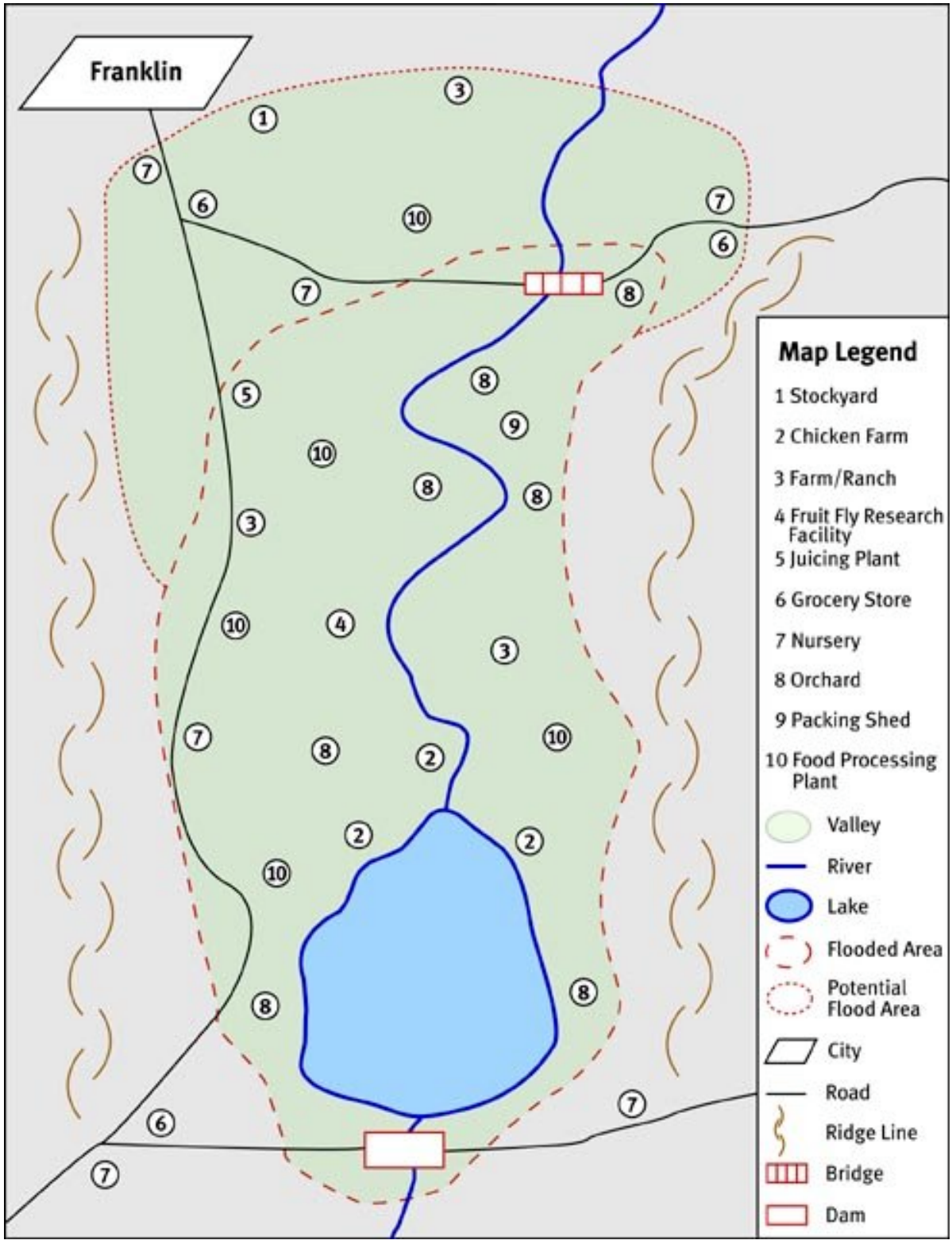
A local sow-farrowing operation is reporting 400 dead sows and 2,500 dead piglets. The poultry industry has also been hit, with at least 100,000 dead chickens at 3 different sites.

In addition, more than 500 cattle and 8 horses need to be relocated. The following animals require euthanasia:

- 10 cattle
- 7 horses
- 30 chickens

Roaring River Flood: Incident Map

The incident is affecting a large geographic area. Given the initial assessments, it is likely that numerous resources and facilities will be required.



Roaring River Flood: Response Challenges Activity

Given what you learned in the ICS-100 course, what do you think are the management and organizational challenges in responding to the Roaring River Flood?

Possible Management and Organizational Challenges:

- **Coordination:** Local, State, and Federal personnel all have a role in responding to this incident. Within USDA, multiple agencies/services will need to work closely together.
- **Information:** The producers, farmers, distributors, and other external groups need accurate, timely information about potential hazards and actions that they should take. The public needs to be assured that the Government is acting to protect the food supply and prevent potential health hazards associated with the dead livestock and poultry.
- **Resources and Facilities:** Specialized personnel are needed to address the fruit fly release, food contamination issues, and veterinary needs. Multiple facilities will be needed throughout the area including an airport and helibase.
- **Safety:** Attention must be paid to the safety of the general public and the response personnel. Controls need to be established for the storage and application of pesticides and veterinary drugs. Vectors (pests, snakes, etc.) and polluted waters also pose safety risks.

Roaring River Flood: Why Use ICS?

As you learned in the ICS-100 course, the Incident Command System is an effective method for managing incident response activities. Using ICS in the Roaring River Flood response:

- **Allows for the efficient delegation of responsibilities.** This is a big incident and is more than one person can manage. It will require all five ICS functions operating to manage effectively. Effective incident management reduces potential chaos, establishes priorities, and helps manage workloads and resources.
- **Establishes a clear chain of command.** All incident personnel know where they fit in the organization, who their supervisors are, and what they are responsible for achieving.
- **Avoids unclear communications.** The use of common terminology allows personnel from different organizations to communicate with each other without being misunderstood.
- **Ensures key functions are covered.** Command staff are assigned key functions such as safety, liaison for coordination with other organizations, and public information. One voice is used to disseminate clear, accurate information.

Why Use ICS? Effective Management

ICS is a management system, not just an organizational chart. The organization is just one of ICS's major features.

The information that you acquire from this training will help to sharpen your management skills, and better equip you to be a fully effective incident or event manager. In the upcoming lessons, you will learn how the ICS management tool is used to address the challenges facing the Roaring River Valley.

Lesson Summary

You have completed the **Course Overview** lesson. This lesson provided a brief tutorial on the structure and layout of the course. It also familiarized you with the incident scenario and how it will be integrated into the other lessons in the course.

The next lesson will describe the features and principles that constitute the Incident Command System.

ICS 200 – Incident Command System

Lesson 2: ICS Features and Principles

Lesson Overview

The **ICS Features and Principles** lesson describes the features and principles that constitute the Incident Command System. Collectively, these define the unique features of ICS as an incident or event management system.

This lesson should take approximately 40 minutes to complete. **Remember, you must complete the entire lesson to receive credit.**

Lesson 2 Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, given a description of the incident situation you should be able to identify the actions that support the following ICS features and principles:

- Establishment and Transfer of Command
- Management by Objectives
- Unified Command
- ICS Management Functions
- Organizational Flexibility
- Unity and Chain of Command
- Span of Control
- Incident Action Plans
- Comprehensive Resources Management
- Common Terminology
- Integrated Communications
- Personnel Accountability

Roaring River Flood: Scenario Update

The Secretary of Agriculture has declared the State of New Liberty a disaster area. The USDA Franklin County Emergency Board Chairperson has been appointed as the Incident Commander.

The rain and flooding is continuing. State and local responders have been working to address needs. The flooding is impacting USDA operations in the area. Based on reports from the affected agricultural operations, the USDA State Emergency Board has requested the Secretary of Agriculture to declare the entire State of New Liberty a disaster area. The Secretary has issued the declaration and appointed the USDA Franklin County Emergency Board Chairperson as the Incident Commander.

The Incident Commander will use ICS principles and features to manage the incident.
To ensure effective command and control, the Incident Commander:

- Establishes and transfers command, as needed.
- Manages by objectives.
- Determines if a unified command structure is needed.
- Assigns additional staff as needed.

Roaring River Flood: Scenario Update (continued)

The standard ICS organizational structure helps the Incident Commander to:

- Establish management functions.
- Ensure unity of command
- Maintain a clear chain of command.
- Create a flexible organizational structure.
- Manage the span of control.

Planning is a critical ICS component for ensuring that there will be a comprehensive management strategy for the incident. Effective Incident Commanders manage by objectives. The objectives are set forth in the Incident Action Plans, and drive all decisions about operations and resource allocation. To facilitate the flow of information, the Incident Commander:

- Requires all incident personnel to use common terminology.
- Establishes integrated communication systems.

Clear chain of command, delegation of authority, and resource tracking ensures personnel accountability for assignments.

Establishment of Command

The first arriving authority at the scene, who has jurisdiction for the incident, establishes incident command and identifies the initial Incident Command Post (ICP). The initial Incident Commander will also:

- **Establish needed authorization and delegations of authority.** These agreements allow the Incident Commander to act on behalf of the Secretary, State Emergency Board and others who have responsibilities for the incident. They also allow the Incident Commander to make decisions and allocate funds.
- **Begin establishing incident facilities.** The next priority is to establish the incident facilities, beginning with the Incident Command Post.
- **Consider the need to transfer command.**

Responsibility for Incident Command

Frequently, command does not stay with the initial Incident Commander. A primary principle of ICS is the ability to assign the most experienced and skilled person as the Incident Commander, regardless of that employee's agency.

When the Agency Administrator(s) assigns the Incident Commander, the Administrator(s) delegates the appropriate agency authorities to that Incident Commander.

The process of moving the responsibility for incident command from one person to another is called transfer of command. All transfers of command must be approved by the agency.

Transfer of Command

The initial Incident Commander will remain in charge until transfer of command is accomplished. Command may transfer to higher qualified or more experienced personnel from the same agency, or be transferred to the employee of another responsible agency.

Higher qualified persons arriving at an incident may:

- Assume command (according to agency guidelines).
- Maintain command as it is.
- Transfer command to a better qualified or more experienced Incident Commander.

Transfer of command begins with an initial briefing on the extent of damage and probable response needs.

Other Reasons To Transfer Command

Command may be transferred when:

- A more qualified person is available to assume command.
- A jurisdiction or agency is legally required to take command.
- Changing command makes good sense.
- The incident complexity changes.
- There is turnover of personnel on long or extended incidents.
- Personnel are called home for any reason.
- Agency Administrators direct a change in command.

Roaring River Flood: Establishment and Transfer of Command

Let's return to the Roaring River Incident.

Initially, the USDA Franklin County Emergency Board Chairperson was appointed as the Incident Commander. As the incident expanded, command was transferred to an experienced member of the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Federal Incident Management Team.

Management by Objectives

Within ICS, management by objectives covers six essential steps. These steps take place on every incident regardless of size or complexity.

Roaring River Flood: Initial Incident Objectives

There's so much that needs to be accomplished and it is easy to lose track of what has priority. The Incident Commander must establish incident objectives from the onset. Identifying objectives allows Command and General Staff members to determine strategy, tactics, and resource needs.

Incident Commander

"There's so much that needs to be accomplished, we need to focus quickly. Based on our most urgent priorities, we have established two initial objectives for the incident.

The first objective is to verify the initial assessments.

The second objective is to develop plans and acquire the needed resources to accomplish the following:

- Ensure the safety and welfare of the personnel who will be assigned to this incident.
- Protect the food supply. One of our greatest concerns is to make sure no contaminated food makes it onto grocery shelves.
- Euthanize those animals that are suffering.
- Collect and dispose of animal carcasses.
- Destroy the escaped fruit flies and prevent further reproduction.

Identifying these initial objectives will allow our Command and General Staff members to determine our strategy, tactics, and resource needs."

Unified Command

In ICS, Unified Command is a unified team effort which allows all agencies with responsibility for the incident, either geographical or functional, to assign an Incident Commander to the Unified Command. The Incident Commanders in the Unified Command establish a common set of incident objectives and strategies.

This type of command structure is accomplished without losing or giving up agency authority, responsibility, or accountability.

Roaring River Flood: Unified Command

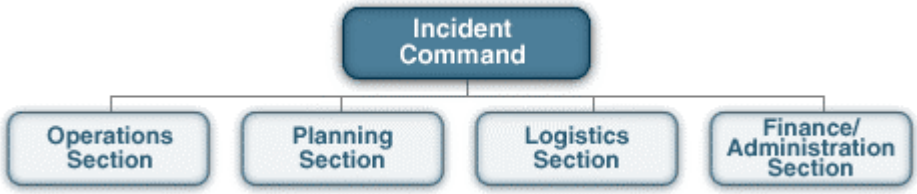
Because of the involvement of local, State, and Federal agencies, the Roaring River Incident Commander considers using a unified command. After careful consideration, the Incident Commander decides not to establish a unified command for the following reasons:

- The Department of Agriculture's responsibilities are clearly separate from and easily conducted independently of ongoing State and local flood response activities.
- There are few resources currently assigned to the incident, and other agencies such as FEMA have not yet been deployed.

Unified command could be used later in the incident response, if warranted.

ICS Management Functions

Five major management functions are the foundation upon which the ICS organization develops.



The five major ICS functions are as follows:

Command: Sets incident objectives and priorities and has overall responsibility at the incident or event.

Operations: Conducts tactical operations to carry out the plan. Develops the tactical assignments and organization, and directs all tactical resources.

Planning: Prepares and documents the Incident Action Plan to accomplish the incident objectives, collects and evaluates information, maintains resource status, and maintains documentation for incident records.

Logistics: Provides support, resources, and all other services needed to meet the incident objectives.

Finance/Administration: Monitors costs related to the incident. Provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses.

Roaring River Flood: Management Functions Activity

Situation: At this point in the incident, the Incident Commander has a limited number of staff members who can be assigned to management functions.

What is the Incident Commander's best course of action?

The Incident Commander's best course of action is to **assume responsibility for all functions that cannot be staffed and delegated**.

Every incident or event requires that certain management functions be performed. Even if an incident is very small, and only one or two people are involved, these activities will still always apply to some degree. Remember:

- Command should never be delegated. In addition, command should always be exercised from the Incident Command Post.
- Delaying planning is not a good option. Without an effective planning function, incident management will become increasingly chaotic and ineffective, and will most likely fail.
- Rotating assignments is not viable because it would result in an unclear chain of command and a lack of management continuity.

Organizational Flexibility

The ICS organization reflects the principle of management by objectives. Every incident has different requirements. The organizational structure should reflect only what is required to meet and support planned incident objectives.

The size and structure of the current organization is determined by the incident objectives. Each activated element must have a person in charge of it. As objectives are achieved, elements that are no longer needed should be reassigned, or demobilized.

Roaring River Flood: Implementing Organizational Flexibility

This incident is going to need a lot of planning and logistical support. To support our initial incident objectives we need to assign staff to verify the initial assessments.

Incident Commander

"This incident is going to need a lot of planning and logistical support. To support our initial incident objectives, we need to assign staff to verify the initial assessments.

Considering the large flood impact area, there's likely to be a lot of competition for resources. And after we secure needed resources, it will take some time for them to mobilize. And of course, the organization will expand to reflect the tactics related to implementing the objectives. What's important is that we expand the structure based on operational needs and without chaos.

I plan to activate the Section Chiefs first. Each Chief in turn will manage the assigned function and determine appropriate staffing."

ICS 200 – Incident Command System

Unity and Chain of Command

In the Incident Command System:

- **Unity of command** means that every individual has only one designated supervisor.
- **Chain of command** means that there is an orderly line of authority within the ranks of the organization, with lower levels subordinate to, and connected to, higher levels.

The above ICS principles are used to communicate direction and maintain management control. These principles do not apply to the exchange of information. Although orders must flow through the chain of command, members of the organization may directly communicate with each other to ask for or share information.

ICS team members work within the ICS position descriptions and follow the designated chain of command, regardless of their nonemergency positions or everyday administrative chain of command.

Unity and Chain of Command

In almost 95 percent of all incidents, the organizational structure for incident management will consist of command and single resources. A single resource is an individual, a piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or a crew or team of individuals with an identified work supervisor that can be used at an incident.

However, as incidents expand, the chain of command is established through an organizational structure that can consist of several layers, as needed, such as:

- **Command:** The Command Staff consists of the Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer. They report directly to the Incident Commander. They may have one or more assistants, as needed.
- **Sections:** A Section is the organizational level with responsibility for a major functional area of the incident (e.g., Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration). Section Chiefs manage sections.
- **Branches:** A Branch is the organizational level having functional or geographic responsibility for major parts of incident operations. Branch Chiefs are in charge of Branches.
- **Divisions/Groups:** Divisions are used to divide an incident geographically. Groups are used to describe functional areas of operations. Divisions and Groups are managed by Division/Group Supervisors.
- **Units:** A Unit is the organizational element having functional responsibility for a specific incident planning, logistics, or finance/administration activity. Units are managed by Unit Leaders.
- **Task Forces/Strike Teams:** Task Forces are composed of **unlike** resources. Strike Teams are composed of **like** resources. Both Task Forces and Strike Teams must be organized within span of control guidelines, and have common communications and a Leader.
- **Resources:** Resources are personnel and equipment available, or potentially available, for assignment to incidents. Resources are described by kind and type (e.g., ground, water, air, etc.) and may be used in tactical support or overhead capacities at an incident.

Span of Control

Span of control pertains to the number of individuals one supervisor can effectively manage. It is especially important to maintain an effective span of control at incidents where safety and accountability have top priority.

Management studies have shown that the span of control for a supervisor falls within a range of three to seven, depending upon the skills of the supervisor and the complexity of the task being overseen. If a supervisor has fewer than three or more than seven people reporting, some adjustment to the organization should be considered.

The general rule for span of control in ICS is one supervisor to five subordinates.

Incident Action Plan

An Incident Action Plan is developed for each operational period (for example, every 12 hours).

The purpose of the Incident Action Plan is to provide all incident supervisory personnel with appropriate direction for that operational period. The plan may be verbal or written.

Written Incident Action Plan

All levels of a growing organization must have a clear understanding of the tactical actions for the next operational period. It is recommended that written plans be used whenever:

- Verbal plans could result in the miscommunication of critical information.
- Two or more jurisdictions or disciplines are involved.
- Large changes of personnel occur by operational periods.
- Personnel are working across more than one operational period.
- There is a full activation of the ICS organization.
- The incident has important legal, political, or public ramifications.
- Complex communication issues arise.

In addition, the Incident Commander may direct the organization to develop a written Incident Action Plan at any time.

Documenting the Plan

In ICS, an Incident Briefing Form is used on smaller incidents to record initial actions and list assigned and available resources. As incidents grow in complexity and/or size, ICS provides a format and process for the development of a written Incident Action Plan.

Comprehensive Resources Management

All ICS resources are ordered, received, assigned, and tracked systematically. Resources include personnel, tools, equipment and their operators, and expendable items (e.g., drugs and syringes that veterinary services will use to euthanize animals, pesticides, etc.).

The Incident Commander uses the Resource Summary on page 4 of ICS Form 201 to document the resource status. Lesson 4 of this course covers resource management in more depth.

Initial Incident Objectives: Review

The first objective is to verify the initial assessments.

The second objective is to develop plans and acquire the needed resources to accomplish the following:

- Ensure the safety and welfare of the personnel who will be assigned to this incident.
- Protect the food supply. One of our greatest concerns is to make sure no contaminated food makes it onto grocery shelves.
- Euthanize those animals that are suffering.
- Collect and dispose of animal carcasses.
- Destroy the escaped fruit flies and prevent further reproduction.

Roaring River Flood: Incident Objectives Activity

Situation: The ICS organization is now fully activated. Tactical assignments are being established for each 12-hour operational period. Staff members have begun working in 12-hour shifts. It is critical that all personnel have a clear understanding of the tactical actions to be accomplished in the next operational period.

What is the Incident Commander's best course of action?

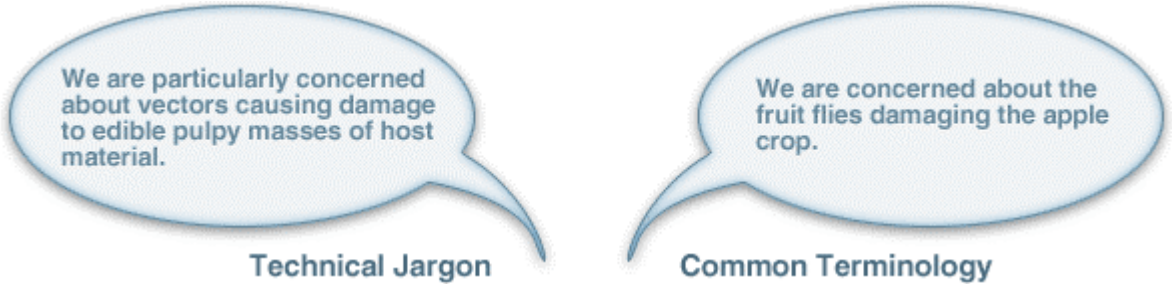
The Incident Commander's best course of action is to **direct the organization to develop a written Incident Action Plan**.

As incidents grow in complexity and/or size, ICS provides a format and process for the development of a written Incident Action Plan. It is recommended that written plans be used whenever:

- Verbal plans could result in the miscommunication of critical information.
- Two or more jurisdictions or disciplines are involved.
- Large changes of personnel occur by shifts.
- Personnel are working across more than one operational period.
- There is a full activation of the ICS organization.
- The incident has important legal, political, or public ramifications.

Common Terminology

The ability to communicate within the ICS is absolutely critical. An essential method for ensuring the ability to communicate is by using standard or common terminology.



A critical part of an effective multiagency incident management system is for all communications to be in plain English. That is, **use clear text. Do not use radio codes, agency-specific codes, or jargon**.

Applying Common Terminology

In ICS, common terminology and designations are applied to:

Organizational Elements	Each ICS organizational element (e.g., Sections, Divisions and/or Groups, Branches) has a specified title.
Resources	Some resources have common designations based on their type or kind. Many resources are also classified by type to indicate their capabilities (e.g., types of helicopters, trucks, heavy equipment, etc.).
Facilities	Standard ICS facilities have specific names. Consistent names clarify the activities that take place at a specific facility, and what members of the organization can be found there.
Position Titles	ICS management or supervisory positions are referred to by titles such as Officer, Chief, Director, Supervisor, etc.

Position Titles

The use of specific position titles in ICS serves three important purposes:

- Titles provide a common organizational language for multiagency use at an incident. For example, confusion can arise if one agency uses the title Branch Chief, another Branch Manager, another Branch Officer, etc.
- The use of distinct titles for ICS positions allows a distinction to be made between the administrative position and rank of the individual and the ICS position. This allows for filling ICS positions with the most qualified individuals rather than by rank.
- The lack of standardization of position titles can also confuse the ordering process when requesting qualified personnel. For example, when ordering personnel to fill unit positions, common titles and associated qualifications ensure that qualified personnel will be acquired.

Integrated Communications: Elements

Effective ICS communications includes three elements:

- The "hardware" systems used to transfer information.
- Planning for the use of all available communications frequencies and resources.
- Procedures and processes for transferring information internally and externally.

Integrated Communications: Planning

Every incident needs a Communications Plan. The plan can be simple and stated verbally, or it can be complex and written. A Communications Plan (ICS Form 205) is a component of the written Incident Action Plan.

An awareness of available communications resources, combined with an understanding of incident requirements, will enable the Communications Unit Leader to develop an effective Communications Plan.

Integrated Communications: Modes

It is not unusual for the communications needs on large incidents to outstrip available radio frequency resources.

Some incidents are conducted entirely without radio support. In such situations, other communications resources—cell phones, alpha pagers, e-mail, secure phone lines, etc.—may be used as the only communication methods for the incident.

Currently, the Incident Commander of the Roaring River incident has decided to use cell phones as the primary communication mode.

Integrated Communications: Networks

At a minimum, any communication network must accomplish the following:

- Link supervisory personnel within the Operations Section to each other and to the Incident Commander.
- Provide common communication among resources assigned to tactical elements such as Branches, Divisions/Groups, and ground-to-air and air-to-air assets.
- Provide a link to the rest of the organization for resource status changes, logistical support, etc.

Personnel Accountability: Procedures

Accountability is a key ICS element. Accountability ensures cost-effective use of resources and improved personnel safety. Several procedures within ICS ensure personnel accountability, including:

Check-In	All personnel must check in upon arrival at an incident. **Check in only once!**
Unity of Command	Everybody has only one supervisor.
Resource Status	The Resources Unit maintains status of all incident resources.
Assignment Lists	Division/Group Assignment Lists identify resources with active assignments in the Operations Section.
Unit Logs	Unit Logs record personnel assigned and major events in all ICS organizational elements.

Personnel Accountability

A large percentage of responder injuries and deaths can be directly attributed to a failure in personnel accountability.

While the Resources Unit in Planning tracks resources assigned to the incident, resource tracking is also taking place in Operations. The Resources Unit, unless operating on the scene of a small incident, is unlikely to be able to track the movement of resources into and out of a rapidly changing "hot zone." Resource tracking at this level is the responsibility of the Division/Group Supervisors, Branch Directors, or whoever has first-level supervisory responsibility for the resource.

Lesson Summary

You have completed the **ICS Features and Principles** lesson. The principles and features described in this unit define the unique ICS features.

The next lesson presents information on ICS organizational structure.

ICS 200 – Incident Command System

Lesson 3: ICS Organization

Lesson Overview

The **ICS Organization** lesson provides information on ICS organizational structure, initial organizational development at an incident, organizational expansion and contraction, and transfer of command.

This lesson should take approximately **45** minutes to complete. **Remember, you must complete the entire lesson to receive credit.**

Lesson 3 Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain how the incident organization expands or contracts to meet operational needs of the incident.
- Match organizational positions with appropriate ICS sections.
- Describe the use of Branches, Divisions, and Groups within the Operations Section, and provide supervisory titles associated with each level.
- List the types of information communicated during the transfer of command.

Roaring River Flood: Scenario Update

- Assessments have been finalized.
- Incident objectives have been established and tactical operations are beginning for the next operational period.
- There is a need to expand the organization to manage and support the incident response operations.

The rain has finally ended, and the river crested earlier than forecasted. The assessments confirm the early estimates of the damage. The Incident Commander has set the incident objectives for the next operational period.

Veterinarian teams have been dispatched. Their first priority is to euthanize the suffering animals.

The next objective is to identify suitable places to relocate stranded but otherwise healthy animals.

A third objective is to begin the disposal operation of dead animals. Since it will take several days to complete this operation, the disposal teams will first target sites closest to population centers.

The Plant Protection and Quarantine Branch objectives are to set traps, in order to locate the fruit flies, to eradicate the fruit flies, and to control the movement of host material.

The top priority for the Food Safety Inspection Service Branch is to ensure that the contaminated food processing plants are brought back online, in compliance with all health and safety regulations.

Given the scope of these incident objectives, the Incident Commander must secure additional resources and expand the organization.

ICS 200 – Incident Command System

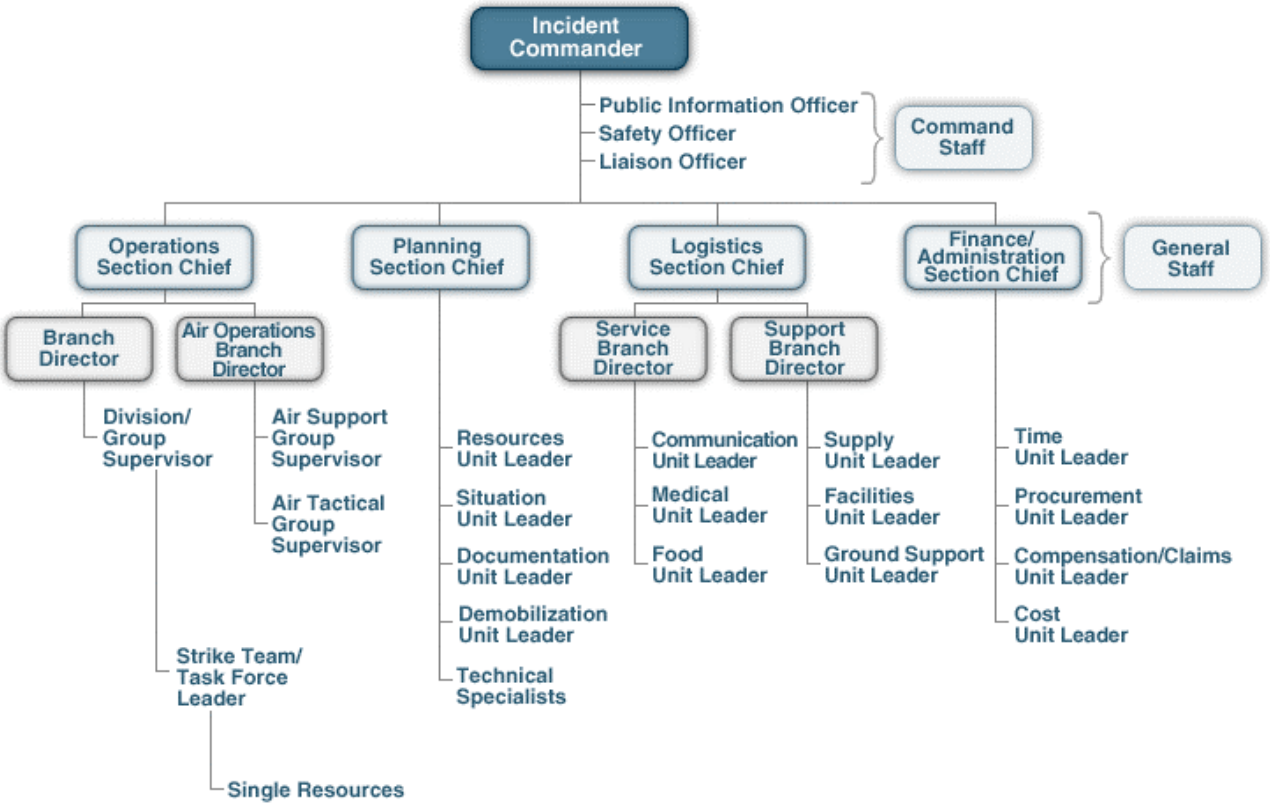
Key Organizational Terms

Key ICS organizational terms include:

- **Incident Commander:** The Incident Commander is the individual responsible for overall management of the incident.
- **Command Staff:** The Command Staff consists of the Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer. They report directly to the Incident Commander.
- **Officer:** Officer is the ICS title for the personnel responsible for the Command Staff positions of Safety, Liaison, and Information.
- **General Staff:** The General Staff are assigned functional authority for Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration. The General Staff also report directly to the Incident Commander.
- **Section:** A Section is the organizational level with responsibility for a major functional area of the incident (e.g., Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration).
- **Section Chief:** Chief is the ICS title for individuals responsible for functional sections: Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration
- **Branch:** A Branch is the organizational level having functional or geographic responsibility for major parts of the Operations or Logistics functions.
- **Branch Director:** Branch Director is the ICS title for individuals responsible for supervision of a Branch.
- **Division/Group:** Divisions are used to divide an incident geographically. Groups are used to divide an incident functionally.
- **Division/Group Supervisor:** Supervisor is the ICS title for individuals responsible for a Division or Group.
- **Strike Team:** A Strike Team is a specified combination of the same kind and type of resources with common communications and a Leader.
- **Task Force:** A Task Force is a combination of single resources assembled for a particular tactical need with common communications and a Leader.
- **Unit:** A Unit is the organizational element having functional responsibility for a specific incident planning, logistical, or financial activity.
- **Task Force/Strike Team/Unit Leader:** Leader is the ICS title for an individual responsible for a Task Force, Strike Team, or functional Unit.
- **Resources:** Resources are personnel and equipment available, or potentially available, for assignment to incidents. Resources may be described by kind and type (e.g., ground, water, air, etc.) and may be used in tactical, support, or overhead capacities at an incident.

Organizational Terminology: The ICS Organizational Chart

The graphic below shows a generic organizational chart with associated key terms. Key ICS titles are associated with the person assigned to each managerial level.



ICS Organizational Chart

The ICS organizational chart is a graphic representation of the incident, including:

- Positions and functions activated.
- Chain of command.
- Reporting relationships.
- Responsibilities delegated.
- Information flow.

Using a graphical representation is a simple yet valuable information tool. Therefore, it is important to maintain the standard terminology and layout of the organizational chart as you apply ICS on incidents.

ICS 200 – Incident Command System

ICS—A Flexible System

Standardization of the organizational chart and terms does not limit its flexibility. A key principle of ICS is its flexibility. The ICS organization may be expanded easily from a very small operation for routine incidents into a larger organization capable of handling catastrophic events.

There are no hard and fast rules for expanding the ICS organization. Many incidents will never require the activation of the entire General Staff. Others will require some members of the staff, or all of them. Experienced Incident Commanders can predict workloads and potential staffing needs, regardless of the kind of incident.

Incident Commander

"Most USDA incidents never get as big as the Roaring River Flood, so I don't usually need an organization with all the positions activated. ICS is like a management toolbox: I just take out whatever tool I need to do the job. To do that, though, I have to know what all those tools do!"

Organizing the Incident Command

As you know, the Incident Commander has the overall responsibility for the management of the incident. Even if other functions are not filled, an Incident Commander will always be designated.

After establishing command, the Incident Commander will consult with Agency Administrators to determine the type of command that is required for the incident. The Incident Commander will then identify the initial organization and staffing for the incident.

Types of Command

The Incident Commander knows that the command function may be carried out in two ways:

- As a **single command** in which the Incident Commander will have complete responsibility for incident management.
- As a **unified command** in which responding agencies and/or jurisdictions with responsibility for the incident share incident management.

Single Command

Under a single command, one person—the Incident Commander—has responsibility for managing the entire incident, as directed and delegated by the Agency Administrator.

Although the Incident Commander consults with other authorities as necessary, he or she approves the Incident Action Plan and makes the final decisions on the response.

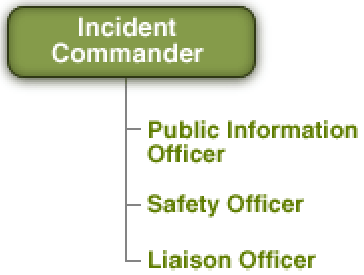
Unified Command

If a Unified Command is needed, Incident Commanders representing agencies or jurisdictions that share responsibility for the incident manage the response from a single Incident Command Post.

Under a Unified Command, a single, coordinated Incident Action Plan will direct all activities. The Incident Commanders will supervise a single Command and General Staff organization and speak with one voice.

Roaring River Flood: Command Staff

Based on the damage assessment and the Incident Action Plan, the Incident Commander appoints the following Command Staff officers:



- **Public Information Officer**: This incident has gained a great deal of media attention, and the organization has important information to share with the public, so a Public Information Officer will be required.
- **Safety Officer**: Many response personnel will be working with hazardous chemicals and in potentially hazardous conditions, so a Safety Officer is a must.
- **Liaison Officer**: Given that State and local efforts are ongoing, and that several additional Federal agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, have sent representatives to the scene, a Liaison Officer is desirable.

Deputies

The Incident Commander may have one or more deputies. An individual assuming a deputy role must be equally capable of assuming the primary role. Therefore, a Deputy Incident Commander must be able to assume the Incident Commander's role.

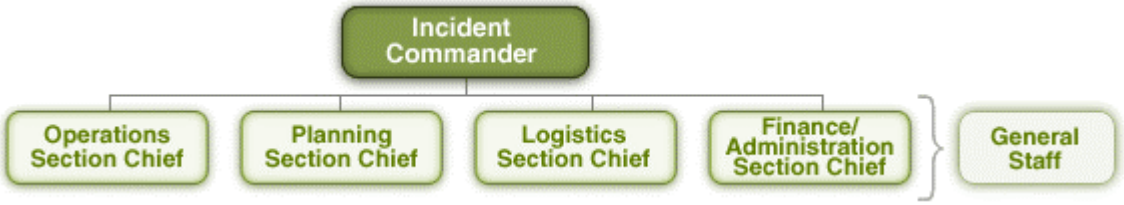
Following are three reasons to designate deputies:

- To perform specific tasks as requested by the Incident Commander.
- To perform the Incident Command function in a relief capacity (e.g., to take over the next operational period).
- To represent an assisting agency that may share jurisdiction or have jurisdiction in the future.

At this time, no deputies are assigned to the Roaring River Flood incident.

Roaring River Flood: General Staff

Based on the assessments and the Incident Action Plan, the Incident Commander appoints the Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration Section Chiefs.



ICS Management Functions: Review

The ICS management functions include:

- **Command:** Sets incident objectives and priorities and has overall responsibility at the incident or event.
- **Operations:** Conducts tactical operations to carry out the plan. Develops the tactical assignments and organization, and directs all tactical resources.
- **Planning:** Prepares and documents the Incident Action Plan to accomplish the incident objectives, collects and evaluates information, maintains resource status, and maintains documentation for incident records.
- **Logistics:** Provides support, resources, and all other services needed to meet the incident objectives.
- **Finance/Administration:** Monitors costs related to the incident. Provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses.

Roaring River Flood: Operations Section Chief

The Operations Section Chief is responsible for the direction and coordination of all incident tactical operations. The Operations Section can be organized in a variety of ways depending upon the:

- Nature of the incident.
- Agencies involved.
- Incident objectives and strategies.

Consideration of these factors will help the Operations Section Chief determine which Branches, Divisions, or Groups to establish.

Review: Branches, Divisions, and Groups

Branches

If the number of Divisions or Groups exceeds the span of control, it may be necessary to establish another level of organization, called a Branch, within the Operations Section. The person in charge of each Branch is designated as a Director. Deputies may also be used at the branch level. While span of control is a common reason to establish Branches, Branches are also used on multidiscipline and multijurisdictional incidents.

Divisions

Divisions are a common method of organizing tactical operations at an incident. Divisions **always** refer to geographically defined areas (e.g., the area around a stadium, the inside or floors of a building, or individual plants or facilities).

Divisions are managed by Division Supervisors. Division Supervisors do not have deputy positions.

Groups

Another common method of organizing operations at an incident is to establish functional Groups. As the name implies, this form of organization deals not with geographic areas, but with functional activity.

Groups, like Divisions, are managed by Supervisors. There are no Group Supervisor deputy positions.

Divisions and Groups work at the same level in the organization. Divisions do not work for Groups, or vice versa.

Roaring River Flood: Operations Section Expansion

The Operations Section Chief knows that the number of resources and tactical complexity of operations will exceed her span of control. She needs to establish additional managerial levels in order to support the activities of the Operations function.

Operations Section Chief

"This is a big incident for USDA and will involve several agencies so I'll need all the organizational elements in Operations in order to maintain an acceptable span of control. Our incident objectives are to:

- Euthanize suffering animals;
- Identify relocation sites;
- Begin the disposal operation;
- Set traps to locate the fruit flies;
- Eradicate the fruit flies;
- Control the movement of host material; and
- Ensure that the contaminated food processing plants are brought back online in compliance with all health and safety regulations.

Because the response will be functional and will involve multiple disciplines, I'll begin by appointing Branch Directors and a Staging Area Manager."

Roaring River Flood: Air Operations Branch

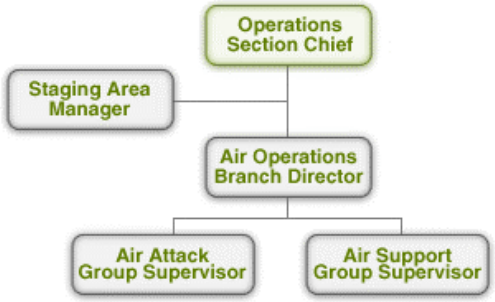
As seen in the organizational chart, the Operations Section Chief appointed an Air Operations Branch Director for this incident. The Air Operations Branch will be used for both aerial reconnaissance and spraying fruit flies.

The Air Operations Branch Director established Air Attack and Air Support Groups and appointed Supervisors for each group.

Roaring River Flood: Staging Area

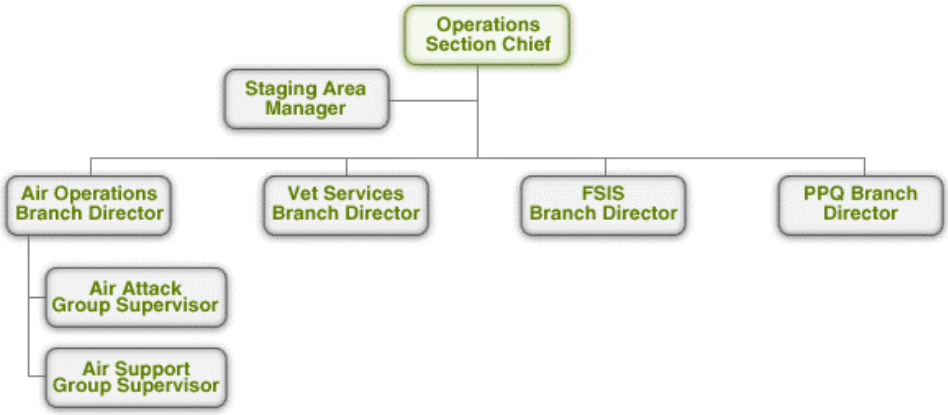
The Operations Section Chief also appointed a Staging Area Manager. A staging area is a location identified at an incident where resources can be placed while awaiting a tactical assignment.

A Manager is assigned to each staging area and reports to the Operations Section Chief, or to the Incident Commander if the Operations Section Chief has not been designated.



Roaring River Flood: Additional Operations Branches

As shown in the organizational chart below, the Operations Section Chief has added the Veterinary Services Branch, Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) Branch, and Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) Branch. Each branch was established because it will assume different tactical assignments and require a large number of resources. As the incident expands, it may be necessary to reorganize the Operations Section.



Roaring River Flood: Vet Services Branch

The Operations Section Chief relies on the Branch Directors and Group Supervisors to determine what additional resources are necessary for this incident.

The Vet Services Branch Director decided to divide into three functional Groups with each being managed by a Supervisor. The Groups are composed as follows:

- Euthanasia Group - 3 Strike Teams
- Disposal Group - 5 Task Forces
- Relocation Group - 5 Task Forces

Vet Services Branch Director

"There have been a lot of livestock losses and injuries as a result of this flood. We have three major tasks to accomplish. Task number one is to euthanize the severely injured livestock. So far, it looks like about 10 head of cattle, 7 horses, and 30 chickens.

Next, we need to relocate about 500 head of cattle and 8 horses. Our final task will be to dispose of animal carcasses, including: 50 head of cattle, 10 horses, 400 sows, and about 2,500 piglets. We're still gathering reports on poultry, but it looks like the total dead will be at least 100,000.

To complete these tasks I'm going to organize my Branch into three functional Groups: Euthanasia, Disposal, and Relocation. Our operation has to happen fast because of the health risks involved if the dead animals are not disposed of quickly. To cover an area this size with this number of affected animals, I'll need at least three Euthanasia Strike Teams, five Disposal Task Forces, and five Relocation Task Forces. Not all of my resources have arrived yet, but I do have enough to get the Euthanasia Strike Teams in the field."

Roaring River Flood: FSIS Branch

The Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) Branch has one major task: to ensure that the contaminated food processing plants are brought back online, in compliance with all health and safety regulations.

Because there are five food processing plants, the FSIS Branch Director divided staff resources geographically. Each plant is a Division. Each Division includes a Compliance Officer as Division Supervisor.

FSIS Branch Director

"We're lucky because only five processing facilities were affected. It's going to take a lot to clean up the facilities and get them into compliance.

My Branch has one major task: to ensure that the contaminated food processing plants are brought back online in compliance with all health and safety regulations.

Since there are five food processing plants, it makes sense to divide my job geographically and make each plant a Division. I'm also going to assign Compliance Officers as the Division Supervisors for each plant."

Roaring River Flood: PPQ Branch

The release of tens of thousands of fruit flies from the damaged research facility poses a great challenge for the Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) Branch.

The PPQ Branch's overall incident tasks are to:
1) Identify the extent of the fruit fly infestation, and
2) Eradicate the fruit flies.
3) Regulate the movement of host material.

The PPQ Branch Director has organized the Branch into two kinds of functional Groups. The Groups are composed as follows:

- Survey and Identification Group – 4 Strike Teams
- Control Group – 3 Strike Teams
- Regulatory Group – 2 Strike Teams

PPQ Branch Director

"We have a big problem here. Tens of thousands of fruit flies were released from the damaged research facility, and we're not sure where they are or what their reproductive capabilities are. Our overall incident tasks are to: 1) set traps to locate fruit flies, 2) eradicate the fruit flies, and 3) control the movement of host material.

To accomplish these tasks, I'm going to organize my Branch into three kinds of functional Groups: one Survey and Identification Group, one Control Group, and one Regulatory Group. This incident will take a lot of PPQ resources.

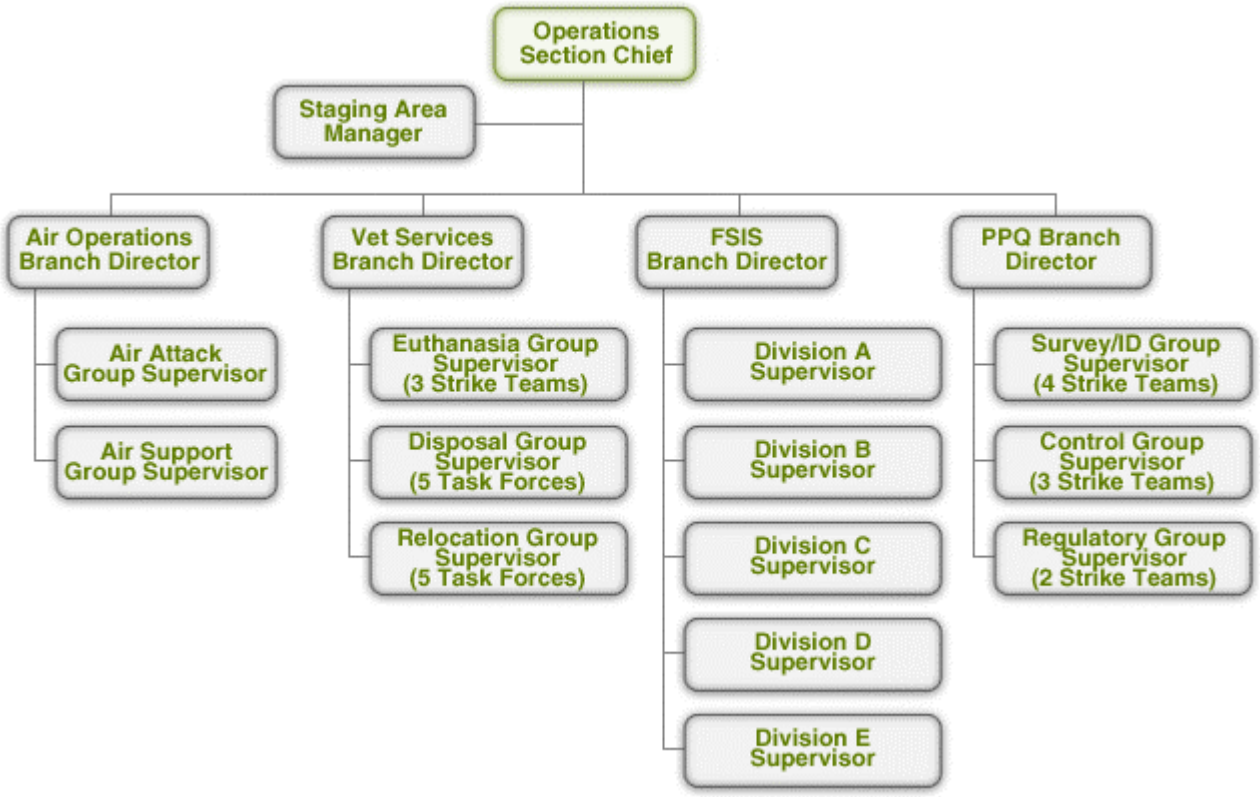
We need accurate maps very quickly, so we'll need the Planning Section to get on that right away. We also need to survey the area to locate and identify the flies, so we'll need three Survey Strike Teams and one Identification Strike Team. We have a good idea of the area to cover, as fruit flies can only reach a limited area. To be safe, we'll survey 4½ miles in each direction from the facility—that's 81 square miles.

Then, after we've identified where the flies are, we'll need at least 3 Control Strike Teams for spraying. I'll need to work with the Air Operations Branch for aerial spraying as well. One concern is that we can't be sure that we've taken care of the problem until the fruit flies have gone through three life cycles. That will take nearly 4 months—and we can't begin trapping and spraying until water levels recede.

Finally, all movement of host material in and out of the affected area must be monitored and controlled to ensure that the fruit flies do not escape containment. I'm going to assign a Regulatory Group, which will include 2 Strike Teams of regulatory officials."

Roaring River Flood: Operations Section Full Expansion

With the assignment of personnel to each of the branches, the Operations Section has reached full expansion. The organizational chart shows the full staffing of the Operations Section.



Roaring River Flood: Expanding the Remaining Sections

As the Operations Section expands, the Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration Sections must expand to support it. It is common for organizations to need one support person for every three people in Operations. While the organization expands, an effective span of control must be maintained.

Incident Commander

"It'll be a challenge for the other Sections to keep pace with the Operations Section's needs, but I want to be sure that the folks in the field have everything they need to do their jobs. The span of control is an important thing for me to keep an eye on as the organization expands. My goal is to maintain a one-to-five supervisory ratio."

Planning Section

The Planning Section is responsible for:

- Collecting and evaluating incident situation information.
- Preparing situation status reports.
- Displaying situation information.
- Maintaining status of resources.
- Preparing and documenting the Incident Action Plan.
- Preparing and archiving incident-related documentation.

Each of these responsibilities will be assigned to a unit under the Planning Section. In addition, information and intelligence functions are traditionally located in the Planning Section.

Information and Intelligence Functions

The analysis and sharing of information and intelligence is an important component of ICS. In this context, intelligence includes not only national security or other types of classified information but also other operational information, such as risk assessments, medical intelligence (i.e., surveillance), weather information, geospatial data, structural designs, toxic contaminant levels, utilities and public works data, etc., that may come from a variety of different sources.

Traditionally, information and intelligence functions are located in the Planning Section. However, in exceptional situations, the IC may need to assign the information and intelligence functions to other parts of the ICS organization. In any case, information and intelligence must be appropriately analyzed and shared with personnel, designated by the Incident Commander, who have proper clearance and a "need-to-know" to ensure that it supports decision-making.

The intelligence function may be organized in one of the following ways:

- Within the Command Staff. This option may be most appropriate in incidents with little need for tactical intelligence or classified intelligence, and where the intelligence is provided by supporting Agency Representatives, through real-time reach-back capabilities.
- As a Unit within the Planning Section. This option may be most appropriate in incidents with some need for tactical intelligence, and where a law enforcement entity is not a member of the Unified Command.
- As a Branch within the Operations Section. This option may be most appropriate in incidents with a high need for tactical intelligence (particularly classified intelligence), and where law enforcement is a member of the Unified Command.
- As a separate General Staff Section, which may be most appropriate in those instances where an incident is heavily influenced by intelligence factors, or where there is a need to manage and/or analyze a large volume of classified or highly sensitive intelligence or information. This option is particularly relevant to a terrorism incident, where intelligence plays a crucial role throughout the incident lifecycle.

Regardless of how it is organized, the information and intelligence functions are also responsible for developing, conducting, and managing information-related security plans and operations as directed by the Incident Commander. These can include information security and operational security activities, as well as the complex task of ensuring that sensitive information of all types (e.g., classified information, law enforcement sensitive information, proprietary information, or export controlled information) is handled in a way that not only safeguards the information, but also ensures that it gets to those who need access to it in order to effectively and safely conduct their missions. The information and intelligence functions also have the responsibility for coordinating information- and operational-security matters with public awareness activities that fall under the responsibility of the Public Information Officer, particularly where such public awareness activities may affect information or operations security.

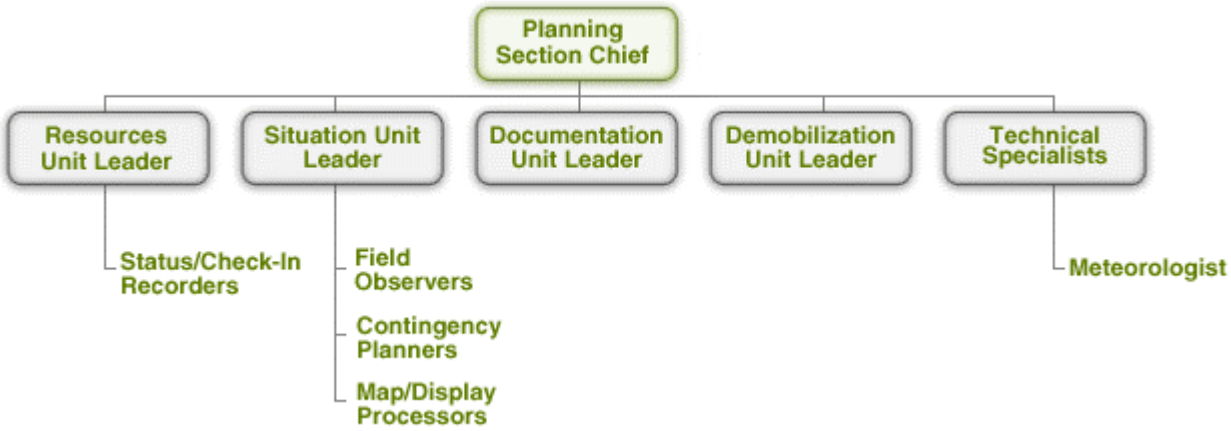
Planning Section Units

The following organizational chart shows the Planning Section units.

- **Resources Unit:** Conducts all check-in activities and maintains the status of all incident resources. The Resources Unit plays a significant role in preparing the written Incident Action Plan.
- **Situation Unit:** Collects and analyzes information on the current situation, prepares situation displays and situation summaries, and develops maps and projections.
- **Documentation Unit:** Provides duplication services, including the written Incident Action Plan. Maintains and archives all incident-related documentation.
- **Demobilization Unit:** Assists in ensuring that resources are released from the incident in an orderly, safe, and cost-effective manner.
- **Technical Specialists** (individuals with skills or knowledge that may be of use to the Incident Management Team) may also be assigned to the Planning Section.

Roaring River Flood: Planning Section

The Planning Section Chief for the Roaring River Flood has established all four units and has assigned Technical Specialists for this incident. The information and intelligence functions are being handled by the Situation Unit.



Logistics Section

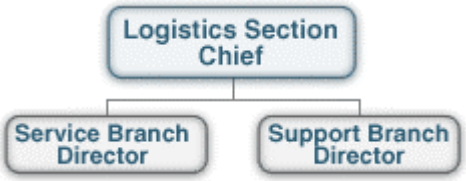
The Logistics Section is responsible for providing services and support to meet all incident or event needs. This section:

- Handles everything from setting up and maintaining the on-site computer network, to providing hotel rooms and food for response personnel, to providing security at the incident facilities.
- Supports personnel and resources **directly assigned** to the incident. For example, the Medical Unit would care only for incident personnel and would not care for community members injured in the flood.

Early recognition of the need for a Logistics Section can reduce time and money spent on an incident.

Logistics Section Branches

Logistics personnel may be organized into the following Branches:



- Service Branch.
- Support Branch.

A Director manages each Branch. Each Branch may have up to three Units assigned to it based upon need. Unit Leaders report to their Branch Director.

Logistics Service Branch

The Logistics Service Branch can be staffed to include a:

- **Communications Unit:** Develops the Communication Plan, distributes and maintains communications equipment, and manages the Incident Communications Center.
- **Medical Unit:** Develops the Medical Plan, and provides first aid and light medical treatment for personnel assigned to the incident.
- **Food Unit:** Supplies the food and potable water for all incident personnel.

Logistics Support Branch

The Logistics Support Branch can be staffed to include a:

- **Supply Unit:** Orders personnel, equipment, and supplies. The Unit stores and distributes supplies, and services nonexpendable equipment. All resource orders are placed through the Supply Unit.
- **Facilities Unit:** Sets up and maintains required facilities to support the incident. Provides managers for the Incident Base and Camps. Also responsible for facility security.
- **Ground Support Unit:** Provides transportation and maintains and fuels vehicles assigned to the incident.

Roaring River Flood: Logistics Section

Because of the complexity of the Roaring River Flood incident, the Logistics Section Chief has established both Branches and all six Units. The organizational chart shows the full staffing of the Logistics Section.

Finance/Administration Section

The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for monitoring incident-related costs, and administering any necessary procurement contracts. The following four Units may be established in the Finance/Administration Section:

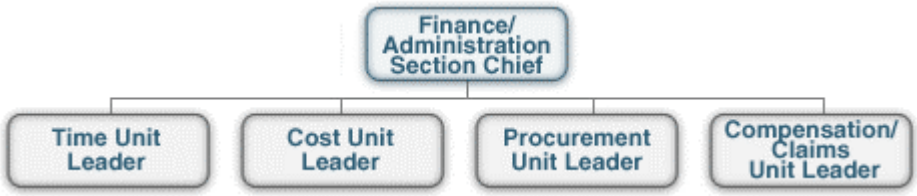
- Time Unit
- Cost Unit
- Procurement Unit
- Compensation/Claims Unit

A Unit Leader is assigned to manage each Unit.

Finance/Administration Section Units

The Finance/Administration Section includes the Time, Cost, Procurement, and Compensation/Claims Units.

- **Time Unit:** Ensures that all personnel time on the event is recorded.
- **Cost Unit:** Collects all cost information and provides cost estimates and cost savings recommendations.
- **Procurement Unit:** Processes administrative paperwork associated with contract services.
- **Compensation/Claims Unit:** Combines two important functions:
- **Compensation** is responsible for seeing that all documentation related to workers compensation is correctly completed. Also, Compensation maintains files of injuries and/or illnesses associated with the incident.
- **Claims** handles the investigation of all claims involving damaged property associated with or involved in the incident.



Roaring River Flood: Finance/Administration Section

The Roaring River Flood Finance/Administration Section Chief has established all four units for the Roaring River incident. The organizational chart shows the full staffing of the Finance/Administration Section.

Avoid Combining ICS Positions

It is important to avoid combining ICS positions. However, one person may be assigned more than one function on the incident organization chart. Positions should not be combined within the organization, however, because problems could be created later if the merged positions have to separate.

Predicting Incident Workloads

Incident workload patterns are predictable throughout the life of the incident. For example:

- In the Planning Section, the Resources and Situation Units will be busy in the initial phases of an incident, while the main workload for the Documentation and Demobilization Units will come later.
- In Logistics, the Supply and Communication Units do the bulk of the early work in an incident.

The arrival of the media and agency representatives is always a good indication of increasing complexity for the Command Staff.

Roaring River Flood: Transferring Command

The Roaring River Flood Incident Commander has just been notified of a family emergency. The commander plans to return home for the next 3 days. A new Incident Commander will assume leadership during this period.

Incident Commander

"I was just notified that my father is critically ill. I plan to leave this evening to join other family members at the hospital. My plan is to transfer command to a new Incident Commander during my absence. When I return, I may assume command again but will need to be brought up to speed."

Transfer of Command Procedures

One of the main features of ICS are procedures to transfer command with minimal disruption. These procedures may be used anytime personnel in supervisory positions change.

Three key procedures should be followed, whenever possible:

- The transfer should be face to face.
- The transfer should include a complete briefing.
- The effective date and time of the transfer is announced to all affected personnel.

Command may be transferred when:

- A more qualified person is available to assume command.
- A jurisdiction or agency is legally required to take command.
- Changing command makes good sense.
- The incident complexity changes.
- There is turnover of personnel on long or extended incidents.
- Personnel are called home for any reason.
- Agency Administrators direct a change in command.

The Transfer-of-Command Briefing

A transfer-of-command briefing should **always** take place. The briefing should include the following critical information:

- Situation status
- Incident objectives and priorities (Incident Action Plan)
- Current organization
- Resource assignments
- Resources en route and/or ordered
- Facilities established
- Communications Plan
- Prognosis, concerns, and related issues
- Introduction of Command Staff and General Staff

Avoid "Falling Through the Cracks"

It is critical to keep information from "falling through the cracks" during changes of incident command. One important information tool is ICS Form 201, Incident Briefing Form. Your agency may have other tools for this purpose. Whether your agency uses ICS Form 201 or another form, you should have some mechanism to ensure that important information does not "get lost."

Lesson Summary

You have completed the **ICS Organization** lesson. This lesson provided information on ICS organizational structure, initial organizational development at an incident, organizational expansion and contraction, and transfer of command.

The next lesson discusses resource management, descriptions of the kinds of incident resources, and a discussion of how resources are procured.

ICS 200 – Incident Command System

Lesson 4: Incident Resources

Lesson Overview

The **Incident Resources** lesson:
- Describes functional roles in resource management.
- Describes the kinds of resources often used in incidents.
- Discusses how resources are procured.
- Provide examples of how resources are typed for various applications.
- Explains why resource status keeping is important to effective incident operations.

This lesson should take approximately **35 minutes** to complete. **Remember, you must complete the entire lesson to receive credit.**

Lesson 4 Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Describe the need for proper incident resource management.
- Describe the role of each function in resource management.
- Describe how incident resources are procured.
- Explain the purpose of resource typing.
- Describe three ways to organize resources and the advantages of each.
- Describe the three resource status conditions used at an incident, and the purpose and limits associated with each.
- Explain how resource status is changed, how notification of changes is made, and how status is maintained at an incident.

Roaring River Flood: Incident Update

- Key personnel are now onsite.
- The following incident facilities have been established:
- Incident Command Post
- Base
- Helibase
- Three staging areas
- Resources are arriving and being processed.
- Personnel are being organized and matched with equipment.

Most of the key personnel are now onsite. There are numerous personnel resources gathering in the three staging areas. Materials and equipment are arriving by plane, truck, and other means.

Roaring River Flood: Incident Update (continued)

The Incident Commander is working closely with the Logistics Section to ensure that approved resources are ordered and distributed to requesting organizational elements. The Planning Section is busy developing maps, assessing damage, tracking resources assigned to the incident, and projecting future needs. The Finance and Administration Section is tracking time and expenditures, and making sure there are funds and contracts in place to cover the costs of the resources. Strike Team and Task Force Leaders are organizing their arriving personnel into teams, and personnel are being matched with their equipment.

Efficient and effective resource identification, procurement, and on-scene supervision are the keys to a successful and cost-effective incident outcome.

Resource Management Activities

Resource management activities fall into three general areas:

- **Resource Identification:** What resources are needed, and how they are defined or "typed?"
- **Resource Procurement:** Where are the resources located, who owns them, and what are the conditions of procurement and restrictions on use?
- **Resource Supervision:** How are the resources "packaged" for tactical application and tracking?

Resource Management Responsibilities

All ICS functions participate in resource management.

Incident Commander

"If this were a small incident, I would approve the ordering and release of resources in person. I would also assign and supervise those resources. On large incidents like the Roaring River Flood, I'll have to delegate these responsibilities."

Operations Section Chief

"As the Operations Section Chief, I supervise the majority of resources assigned to this incident, including detailed tracking of resources within my Section. When Operations needs additional resources, I order them directly from the Logistics Section."

Planning Section Chief

"The Planning Section tracks all resources assigned to the incident including, but not limited to, those assigned to Operations. On small incidents, we may track resources assigned to hazardous tactical operations. On incidents as large as this one, it's very difficult for us to track tactical resources in great detail. In addition to our resource tracking responsibilities, we assist in resource identification and procurement by forecasting incident growth and the need for specialized resources."

Logistics Section Chief

"Logistics provides "one-stop shopping" for all resources on the incident. Without us, it would be virtually impossible to provide cost-effective resource management, especially on large incidents like this. We're also responsible for feeding all personnel and for fueling and maintaining equipment resources while they are used on the incident."

Finance/Administration Section Chief

"The Finance and Administration Section is responsible for negotiating any contracts needed to purchase resources. We're also responsible for maintaining time records and processing payroll documents. Because we pay the bills for the incident, we will probably be working long after everyone else has been demobilized."

Identifying and Defining Resources

ICS resources can be factored into two categories:

- Tactical Resources
- Support Resources

Tactical Resources

Personnel and major items of equipment (with or without operator) available or potentially available to the Operations function on assignment to incidents are called **tactical resources**.

Because tactical resources are deployed in direct response roles, they are the primary concern in resource management. All tactical resources are assigned to the Operations Section.

Support Resources

In addition to tactical resources, there are support resources.

Support resources include all other resources required to support the incident. Food, communications equipment, tents, and buses with drivers are examples of support resources.

Describing Resources: Kind

Resources can be described by both **kind** and **type**. Let's begin by reviewing resource kinds.

The **kind of resource** describes what the resource is. For example helicopter, medical staff, portable X-ray machine, bulldozer, and plow are all kinds of resources.

Kinds of resources can be as broad as necessary to suit the incident application.

Describing Resources: Kind

Some kinds of resources may be used by different ICS sections.

Describing Resources: Type

The **type of resource** describes a capability for that kind of resource.

Many tactical resources, such as helicopters, will have a wide variety of capabilities and uses. If the Operations Section Chief simply ordered a helicopter (kind of resource), the resource delivered may be inadequate.

For this reason, it is strongly recommended that the various kinds of resources used for ICS applications be "typed" whenever possible.

Advantages of Typing Resources

"Typing" is a system of describing the sized, capability, equipment, and staffing characteristics of a specific resource. Following are the advantages of typing resources:

- **In Planning:** Knowing the specific capabilities of the kinds of resources helps planners decide the type and quantity of resources needed.
- **In Ordering:** Ordering resources by type saves time, reduces errors, and reduces nonessential communications.
- **In Monitoring Resource Use:** Type descriptions enable managers to monitor for undercapability or overcapability. Careful monitoring of resource performance can lead to the use of less costly resources, ultimately increasing work performance and reducing cost.

Procuring Resources: Sources

After identifying a needed resource, it is usually easy to figure out where to get it. Typical procurement sources for ICS resources include:

- **In-house sources:** Other locations or agencies within USDA.
- **Mutual-aid agencies:** Agencies with which USDA has formal agreements covering the use or sharing of resources.
- **Other government entities:** Agencies at any level of government that can provide the required resources.
- **Commercial sources:** Private-sector producers and/or suppliers of the needed resource.

Processing Orders

Even though processing orders for resources is the responsibility of the Logistics Section, all sections should understand the information needed to implement an efficient ordering process. Make sure that orders:

- Are approved by the chain of command.
- Describe the specific requirements, if the resource is not typed.
- State any other important factors or restrictions.
- Name a suggested source (if known).
- Include a specific timeframe in which the resource is needed.
- Specify a delivery point or contact.

Checklist for Ordering Resources

Instructions: Use the questions below as a guide when ordering resources. Considering each of these questions will help the Logistics Section process your order.

✓ Has the request followed the appropriate chain of command?
✓ Is the resource typed, or if not, are its requirements clearly defined?
✓ Which is more important: time or cost? (The faster you need it, the more it costs. If time is not a factor, cost can be weighted more heavily.)
✓ Do you have a suggested source in mind?
✓ Are there any restrictions on ordering? Some resources must be ordered through specific channels. Others may require special authorizations. Some resources may require a bid process.
✓ When is the resource needed? (ASAP is not an acceptable timeframe.)
✓ What is the delivery point or contact information?

Payment

Procuring incident resources requires coordination between the Logistics and Finance/Administration Sections. In order to establish an effective procurement process, personnel assigned to Logistics and Finance/Administration must have the necessary procurement and contract authorities (another benefit of typing).

Incident activities may be halted or hampered without onsite procurement and contracting authority.

Organizing Resources

After resources have arrived at the incident, many will need to be organized to ensure efficient supervision within the limits of effective span of control. There are three ways of organizing resources at an incident:

- Single Resources
- Task Forces
- Strike Teams

Single Resources

Single resources are individual personnel, single pieces of equipment (with or without operator), or a crew of individuals, with an identified work supervisor. A single resource is often the most common way of using initial resources on an incident.

Single resources can be typed to reflect capability. Unless a Single resource is typed, its specific capabilities may not be clear to everyone.

Task Forces

Task Forces are any combination and number of single resources (within span-of-control limits) assembled for a particular tactical need. Task Forces may be:

- A mix of different kinds of resources.
- The same kind but different types of resources.

Organizing resources into Task Forces provides the mix of resources needed for a specific assignment, and reduces span of control. This is both safer and more efficient use of resources.

For example, the graphic depicts a Task Force consisting of three different kinds of spray equipment.

Strike Teams

Incident resources can also be organized into Strike Teams. Strike Teams consist of resources that are of the same type.

Strike Teams are a good way to organize multiple Single Resources that share the same characteristics.

For example, the graphic depicts a Strike Team made up of three identical pieces of spray equipment.

Task Forces and Strike Teams: Requirements

Both Task Forces and Strike Teams are required to:

- Have a Leader.
- Have communications between team members and Leaders, and between Leaders and the next highest level of supervision.
- Have their own transportation, when required.
- Organize within span-of-control limits.

Advantages of Task Forces and Strike Teams

Organizing into Task Forces and Strike Teams offers several distinct advantages, including:

- Enabling more effective resource use planning.
- Providing an efficient way of quickly ordering what is necessary.
- A net reduction in the time required to communicate, because critical information is conveyed to Task Force and Strike Team Leaders rather than to single resources.
- Increasing the ability to expand the organization for large incidents while maintaining good span of control.
- Providing close resource control and accountability.

Roaring River Flood: Organizing Resources

Vet Services Disposal Group Supervisor

The Vet Services Branch Director divided the Branch into three functional Groups. The Groups are:

- Euthanasia Group
- Disposal Group
- Relocation Group

"Disposing of animal carcasses requires different kinds of resources: a backhoe or front loader; a lowboy for transport; and a driver, an operator, and a supervisor. Having these resources organized into Task Forces makes an effective combination of resources for the task, and helps maintain my span of control."

PPQ Survey/ID Group Supervisor

The PPQ Branch Director organized the Branch into two kinds of functional Groups. The Groups are:

- Survey and Identification Group
- Control Group
- Regulatory Group

"Each of my Strike Teams is comprised of four identically qualified and equipped specialists. A specialist has been appointed as the Leader of each team. Having them organized as Strike Teams helps to maintain an effective span of control."

FSIS Division A Supervisor

The FSIS Branch Director divided staff resources geographically. Each plant is a Division. Each Division includes a Compliance Officer as Division Supervisor.

"We are organized into Divisions to cover specific geographical areas, corresponding to the five food processing plants. I am responsible for ensuring that my assigned plant comes back online in compliance with all applicable health and safety regulations. Since clean-up and decontamination are the responsibility of the plant itself, I don't need any resources right now. But if I do need them, I will request them from the FSIS Branch Director."

Maintaining Resource Status

Maintaining status of all resources assigned to the incident is an important aspect of resource management. Knowing where resources are at all times is vital to ensuring safety on the incident.

In addition, not all tactical resources at an incident may be usable at any given time. For a variety of reasons, some resources may be temporarily out-of-service or placed into an available (ready) but not assigned status.

Resource Status Conditions

All tactical resources at an incident will be assigned to one of the three following status conditions:

- **Assigned:** Assigned resources are working on an assignment under the direction of a Supervisor.
- **Available:** Available resources are assembled, have been issued their equipment, and are ready for deployment. Available resources are located at one of the staging areas.
- **Out-of-Service:** Out-of-service resources are not ready for available or assigned status.

Out-of-Service Resources

Resources may be out-of-service for a number of reasons, including:

- Routine servicing of vehicles or other equipment.
- To allow for rest/downtime.
- Insufficient personnel to operate available equipment.
- Environmental reasons, such as darkness or weather.
- Financial reasons (e.g., when personnel exceed allowed overtime costs).

Resources that go out-of-service for other than mechanical or staffing reasons will usually be sent to the Incident Base.

Changing Resource Status

Resource status is maintained and changed by the supervisor who has the resources under assignment. On larger incidents, a Resources Unit, if established, will also maintain status on all resources assigned to the incident.

Who Can Change Resource Status?

Depending on the overall incident organization, the persons who supervise the resource either directly or indirectly can change its status. This can include:

- The person in charge of the single resource.
- A Task Force or Strike Team Leader.
- A Division or Group Supervisor.
- A Branch Director.
- The Operations Section Chief or Incident Commander.

The Resources Unit will not, on its own authority, change the status of resources assigned to Operations.

Communicating Resource Status Changes

All status changes that last for more than a few minutes must be communicated to the appropriate organizational elements. The individual who makes the status change is responsible for making sure that the change is communicated up the chain of command and to the person or unit responsible for maintaining overall resource status at the incident.

For routine changes of status that do not impact the Incident Action Plan (end of shift, lunch breaks, etc), the information may not need to go beyond the next Supervisor. If the change of status is the result of mechanical break down, lack of supplies, or similar problems, the IAP could be impacted, and the information will be shared more widely among the Operations Staff and with the Incident Commander.

Information about the status change will be passed to the Resources Unit.

Resource Status Keeping Systems

There are several resource status keeping systems that can be used to track resources at incidents.

Manual Recordkeeping on Forms

The Resources Summary sections of the ICS forms listed below provide a manual method of recordkeeping. These forms provide areas for recording information about resources and their assignments.

- ICS Form 201, Incident Briefing Form
- ICS Form 211, Incident Check-In Form
- ICS Form 204, Division/Group Assignment Form

Card System

Several versions of card systems are available to track resource status. One of these systems uses different-colored T-shaped cards for each kind of resource. The cards are used to record information about the resource and filed in racks by assignment location.

- ICS Form 219, 1-8, Resource Status Card Form

Magnetic Symbols or Icons on Maps or Status Boards

Magnetic symbols or icons are sometimes used to track resources. Symbols are prepared in different shapes, sizes, and colors, with space to pencil in the resource designator. Then, the symbols are placed on maps or boards to indicate the location of assignment.

Computer System

A laptop computer can be used with a simple file management or spreadsheet program to maintain resource information. This system can be used to compile check-in information and then be maintained to reflect current resource status.

Roaring River Flood: Demobilization

Demobilization planning starts at the very beginning of the incident. The complexity of the demobilization process is based on the needs of the incident. Personnel begin demobilizing when their objectives have been achieved. Then personnel will be released according to the demobilization plan.

"Just as we are getting our full complement of resources, we begin planning how we will eventually demobilize resources. I work closely with all Sections to identify when we'll be ready to begin reducing the organization. We'll begin demobilizing Veterinary Services personnel when all animal disease management concerns have been addressed. FSIS personnel will be needed until all of the processing plants have completed actions necessary for the plants to resume operations, and the plants' compliance with sanitation standards and other operational requirements has been verified. It will be a longer period of time before we can demobilize the PPQ staff. Eradicating the fruit flies will take a long-term commitment. The flexibility of ICS allows us to demobilize the resources not needed, while keeping those that are still required."

Lesson Summary

You have completed the **Incident Resources** lesson. This lesson:

- Described functional roles in resource management.
- Described the kinds of resources often used in incidents.
- Discussed how resources are procured.
- Provided examples of how resources are typed for various applications.
- Explained why resource status keeping is important to effective incident operations.

You have now completed all of the ICS content lessons! When you are ready, you should proceed to the Summary and Posttest. To receive credit for the course, you must complete the posttest.

ICS 200 – Incident Command System

Lesson 5: Summary and Posttest

Summary and Posttest: Overview

This lesson provides a brief summary of the ICS 200 Course contents. After reviewing the summary information, you will then take the course posttest.

Completing this summary and the posttest should take approximately **40 minutes** to complete. **Remember, you must complete the posttest to receive credit for this course.**

Why Use ICS?: Summary

The Incident Command System is an effective method for managing incident response activities. Using ICS:

- **Allows for the efficient delegation of responsibilities.** Effective incident management reduces potential chaos, establishes priorities, and helps manage workloads and resources.
- **Establishes a clear chain of command.** All incident personnel know where they fit in the organization, who their supervisors are, and what they are responsible for achieving.
- **Avoids unclear communications.** The use of common terminology allows personnel from different organizations to communicate with each other without being misunderstood.
- **Ensures key functions are covered.** Command staff are assigned key functions such as safety, liaison for coordination with other organizations, and public information. One voice is used to disseminate clear, accurate information.

ICS is a management system, not just an organizational chart. The organization is just one of ICS's major features.

Establishment of Command: Summary

The first arriving authority at the scene, who has jurisdiction for the incident, establishes incident command and identifies the initial Incident Command Post (ICP). The initial Incident Commander will also:

- **Establish needed authorization and delegations of authority.** These agreements allow the Incident Commander to act on behalf of the Secretary, State Emergency Board and others who have responsibilities for the incident. They also allow the Incident Commander to make decisions and locate funds.
- **Begin establishing incident facilities.** The next priority is to establish the incident facilities, beginning with the Incident Command Post.
- **Consider the need to transfer command.**

Responsibility for Incident Command: Summary

Frequently, command does not stay with the initial Incident Commander. A primary principle of ICS is the ability to assign the most experienced and skilled person as the Incident Commander, regardless of that employee's agency.

When the Agency Administrator(s) assigns the Incident Commander, the Administrator(s) delegates the appropriate agency authorities to that Incident Commander.

The process of moving the responsibility for incident command from one person to another is called transfer of command. All transfers of command must be approved by the agency.

Transfer of Command: Summary

The initial Incident Commander will remain in charge until transfer of command is accomplished. Command may transfer to higher qualified or more experienced personnel from the same agency, or be transferred to the employee of another responsible agency.

Higher qualified persons arriving at an incident may:

- Assume command (according to agency guidelines).
- Maintain command as it is.
- Transfer command to a better qualified or more experienced Incident Commander.

Transfer of command begins with an initial briefing on the extent of damage and probable response needs.

Transfer of Command Procedures

One of the main features of ICS are procedures to transfer command with minimal disruption. These procedures may be used anytime personnel in supervisory positions change.

Three key procedures should be followed, whenever possible:

- The transfer should be face to face.
- The transfer should include a complete briefing.
- The effective date and time of the transfer is announced to all affected personnel.

Other Reasons To Transfer Command

Command may be transferred when:

- A more qualified person is available to assume command.
- A jurisdiction or agency is legally required to take command.
- Changing command makes good sense.
- The incident complexity changes.
- There is turnover of personnel on long or extended incidents.
- Personnel are called home for any reason.
- Agency Administrators direct a change in command.

Transfer-of-Command Briefing

A transfer-of-command briefing should **always** take place. The briefing should include the following critical information:

- Situation status
- Incident objectives and priorities (Incident Action Plan)
- Current organization
- Resource assignments
- Resources en route and/or ordered
- Facilities established
- Communications Plan
- Prognosis, concerns, and related issues
- Introduction of Command Staff and General Staff

Management by Objectives: Summary

Within ICS, management by objectives covers six essential steps. These steps take place on every incident regardless of size or complexity.

Types of Command: Summary

The Incident Commander knows that the command function may be carried out in two ways:

- As a **single command** in which the Incident Commander will have complete responsibility for incident management.
- As a **unified command** in which responding agencies and/or jurisdictions with responsibility for the incident share incident management.

Single Command

Under a single command, one person—the Incident Commander—has responsibility for managing the entire incident.

Although the Incident Commander consults with other authorities as necessary, he or she approves the Incident Action Plan and makes the final decisions on the response.

Unified Command

In ICS, Unified Command is a unified team effort which allows all agencies with responsibility for the incident, either geographical or functional, to assign an Incident Commander to the Unified Command. The Incident Commanders in the Unified Command establish a common set of incident objectives and strategies.

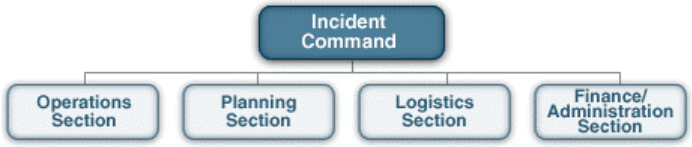
This type of command structure is accomplished without losing or giving up agency authority, responsibility, or accountability.

If a Unified Command is needed, Incident Commanders representing agencies or jurisdictions that share responsibility for the incident manage the response from a single Incident Command Post.

Under a Unified Command, a single, coordinated Incident Action Plan will direct all activities. The Incident Commanders will supervise a single Command and General Staff organization and speak with one voice.

ICS Management Functions - Summary

The five major management functions are:



- **Command**: Sets incident objectives and priorities and has overall responsibility at the incident or event.
- **Operations**: Conducts tactical operations to carry out the plan. Develops the tactical assignments and organization, and directs all tactical resources.
- **Planning**: Prepares and documents the Incident Action Plan to accomplish the incident objectives, collects and evaluates information, maintains resource status, and maintains documentation for incident records.
- **Logistics**: Provides support to meet incident needs. Provides resources and all other services needed to support the incident.
- **Finance/Administration**: Monitors costs related to the incident. Provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses.

Organizational Flexibility: Summary

The ICS organization reflects the principle of management by objectives. Every incident has different requirements. The organizational structure should reflect only what is required to meet and support planned incident objectives.

The size and structure of the current organization is determined by the incident objectives. Each activated element must have a person in charge of it. As objectives are achieved, elements that are no longer needed should be reassigned, or demobilized.

Unity and Chain of Command: Summary

In the Incident Command System:

- **Unity of command** means that every individual has only one designated supervisor.
- **Chain of command** means that there is an orderly line of authority within the ranks of the organization, with lower levels subordinate to, and connected to, higher levels.

Unity and Chain of Command

These ICS principles are used to communicate direction and maintain management control. These principles do not apply to the exchange of information. Although orders must flow through the chain of command, members of the organization may directly communicate with each other to ask for or share information.

ICS team members work within the ICS position descriptions and follow the designated chain of command, regardless of their nonemergency positions or everyday administrative chain of command.

In almost 95 percent of all incidents, the organizational structure for incident management will consist of command and single resources. A single resource is an individual, a piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or a crew or team of individuals with an identified work supervisor that can be used at an incident.

However, as incidents expand, the chain of command is established through an organizational structure that can consist of several layers.

Span of Control: Summary

Span of control pertains to the number of individuals one supervisor can effectively manage. It is especially important to maintain an effective span of control at incidents where safety and accountability have top priority.

Management studies have shown that the span of control for a supervisor falls within a range of three to seven, depending upon the skills of the supervisor and the complexity of the task being overseen. If a supervisor has fewer than three or more than seven people reporting, some adjustment to the organization should be considered.

The general rule for span of control in ICS is one supervisor to five subordinates.

Incident Action Plan: Summary

An Incident Action Plan is developed for each operational period (for example, every 12 hours).

The purpose of the Incident Action Plan is to provide all incident supervisory personnel with appropriate direction for that operational period. The plan may be verbal or written.

Incident Action Plan

All levels of a growing organization must have a clear understanding of the tactical actions for the next operational period. It is recommended that written plans be used whenever:

- Verbal plans could result in the miscommunication of critical information.
- Two or more jurisdictions or disciplines are involved.
- Large changes of personnel occur by operational periods.
- Personnel are working across more than one operational period.
- There is a full activation of the ICS organization.
- The incident has important legal, political, or public ramifications.
- Complex communication issues arise.

In addition, the Incident Commander may direct the organization to develop a written Incident Action Plan at any time.

In ICS, an Incident Briefing Form is used on smaller incidents to record initial actions and list assigned and available resources. As incidents grow in complexity and/or size, ICS provides a format and process for the development of a written Incident Action Plan.

Resources: Summary

Resources include personnel, tools, equipment and their operators, and expendable items. Resources can be described by both kind and type.

After resources have arrived at the incident, many will need to be organized to ensure efficient supervision within the limits of effective span of control.

Kind of Resource

The kind of resource describes what the resource is. For example helicopter, medical staff, portable X-ray machine, bulldozer, and plow are all kinds of resources.

Kinds of resources can be as broad as necessary to suit the incident application. Some kinds of resources may be used by different ICS sections.

Type of Resource

The type of resource describes a capability for that kind of resource.

Many tactical resources, such as helicopters, will have a wide variety of capabilities and uses. If the Operations Section Chief simply ordered a helicopter (kind of resource), the resource delivered may be inadequate.

For this reason, it is strongly recommended that the various kinds of resources used for ICS applications be "typed" whenever possible.

Advantages of Typing Resources

"Typing" is a system of describing the sized, capability, equipment, and staffing characteristics of a specific resource. Following are the advantages of typing resources:

- **In Planning:** Knowing the specific capabilities of the kinds of resources helps planners decide the type and quantity of resources needed.
- **In Ordering:** Ordering resources by type saves time, reduces errors, and reduces nonessential communications.
- **In Monitoring Resource Use:** Type descriptions enable managers to monitor for undercapability or overcapability. Careful monitoring of resource performance can lead to the use of less costly resources, ultimately increasing work performance and reducing cost.

Single Resources

Single resources are individual personnel, single pieces of equipment (with or without operator), or a crew of individuals, with an identified work supervisor. A single resource is often the most common way of using initial resources on an incident.

Single resources can be typed to reflect capability. Unless a Single resource is typed, its specific capabilities may not be clear to everyone.

Task Forces

Task Forces are any combination and number of single resources (within span-of-control limits) assembled for a particular tactical need. Task Forces may be:

- A mix of different kinds of resources.
- The same kind but different types of resources.

Organizing resources into Task Forces provides the mix of resources needed for a specific assignment, and reduces span of control. This is both safer and more efficient use of resources.

Strike Teams

Incident resources can also be organized into Strike Teams. Strike Teams consist of resources that are of the same type.

Strike Teams are a good way to organize multiple Single Resources that share the same characteristics.

Task Force and Strike Team Requirements

Both Task Forces and Strike Teams are required to:

- Have a Leader.
- Have communications between team members and Leaders, and between Leaders and the next highest level of supervision.
- Have their own transportation, when required.
- Organize within span-of-control limits.

Advantages of Task Forces and Strike Teams

Organizing into Task Forces and Strike Teams offers several distinct advantages, including:

- Enabling more effective resource use planning.
- Providing an efficient way of quickly ordering what is necessary.
- A net reduction in the time required to communicate, because critical information is conveyed to Task Force and Strike Team Leaders rather than to single resources.
- Increasing the ability to expand the organization for large incidents while maintaining good span of control.
- Providing close resource control and accountability.

Resources Management: Summary

After identifying a needed resource, it is usually easy to figure out where to get it.

All ICS resources are ordered, received, assigned, and tracked systematically. The Incident Commander uses the Resource Summary on page 4 of ICS Form 201 to document the resource status.

Resource Management Activities

All ICS functions participate in resource management. Resource management activities fall into three general areas:

- **Resource Identification:** What resources are needed, and how they are defined or "typed?"
- **Resource Procurement:** Where are the resources located, who owns them, and what are the conditions of procurement and restrictions on use?
- **Resource Supervision:** How are the resources "packaged" for tactical application and tracking?

Identifying and Defining Resources

ICS resources can be factored into two categories:

- **Tactical Resources:** Personnel and major items of equipment (with or without operator) available or potentially available to the Operations function on assignment to incidents are called tactical resources. Because tactical resources are deployed in direct response roles, they are the primary concern in resource management. All tactical resources are assigned to the Operations Section.
- **Support Resources:** Support resources include all other resources required to support the incident. Food, communications equipment, tents, and buses with drivers are examples of support resources.

Maintaining Resource Status

Maintaining status of all resources assigned to the incident is an important aspect of resource management. Knowing where resources are at all times is vital to ensuring safety on the incident.

In addition, not all tactical resources at an incident may be usable at any given time. For a variety of reasons, some resources may be temporarily out-of-service or placed into an available (ready) but not assigned status.

Resource Status Conditions

All tactical resources at an incident will be assigned to one of the three following status conditions:

- **Assigned:** Assigned resources are working on an assignment under the direction of a Supervisor.
- **Available:** Available resources are assembled, have been issued their equipment, and are ready for deployment. Available resources are located at one of the staging areas.
- **Out-of-Service:** Out-of-service resources are not ready for available or assigned status.

Changing Resource Status

Resource status is maintained and changed by the supervisor who has the resources under assignment. On larger incidents, a Resources Unit, if established, will also maintain status on all resources assigned to the incident.

Resource Status Keeping Systems

There are several resource status keeping systems that can be used to track resources at incidents.

- Manual recordkeeping on forms.
- Card system.
- Magnetic symbols on maps or status boards.
- Computer system.

No one technique is recommended; **all have advantages and disadvantages**.

Communications: Summary

The ability to communicate within the ICS is absolutely critical. Essential methods for ensuring the ability to communicate include the use of:

- Integrated communications and
- Common terminology.

Integrated Communications: Elements

Effective ICS communications includes three elements:

- The "hardware" systems used to transfer information.
- Planning for the use of all available communications frequencies and resources.
- Procedures and processes for transferring information internally and externally.

Integrated Communications: Planning

Every incident needs a Communications Plan. The plan can be simple and stated verbally, or it can be complex and written. A Communications Plan (ICS Form 205) is a component of the written Incident Action Plan.

An awareness of available communications resources, combined with an understanding of incident requirements, will enable the Communications Unit Leader to develop an effective Communications Plan.

Integrated Communications: Modes

It is not unusual for the communications needs on large incidents to outstrip available radio frequency resources.

Some incidents are conducted entirely without radio support. In such situations, other communications resources—cell phones, alpha pagers, e-mail, secure phone lines, etc.—may be used as the only communication methods for the incident.

Integrated Communications: Networks

At a minimum, any communication network must accomplish the following:

- Link supervisory personnel within the Operations Section to each other and to the Incident Commander.
- Provide common communication among resources assigned to tactical elements such as Branches, Divisions/Groups, and ground-to-air and air-to-air assets.
- Provide a link to the rest of the organization for resource status changes, logistical support, etc.

Common Terminology

A critical part of an effective multiagency incident management system is for all communications to be in plain Englis. That is, **use clear text. Do not use radio codes, agency-specific codes, or jargon**.

- **Technical Jargon:** We are particularly concerned about vectors causing damage to edible pulpy masses of host material.
- **Common Terminology:** We are concerned about the fruit flies damaging the apple crop.

Applying Common Terminology

In ICS, common terminology and designations are applied to:

- **Organizational Elements:** Each ICS organizational element (e.g., Sections, Divisions and/or Groups, Branches) has a specified title.
- **Resources:** Some resources have common designations based on their type or kind. Many resources are also classified by type to indicate their capabilities (e.g., types of helicopters, trucks, heavy equipment, etc.).
- **Facilities:** Standard ICS facilities have specific names. Consistent names clarify the activities that take place at a specific facility, and what members of the organization can be found there.
- **Position Titles:** ICS management or supervisory positions are referred to by titles such as Officer, Chief, Director, Supervisor, etc.

Position Titles

The use of specific position titles in ICS serves three important purposes:

- Titles provide a common organizational language for multiagency use at an incident. For example, confusion can arise if one agency uses the title Branch Chief, another Branch Manager, another Branch Officer, etc.
- The use of distinct titles for ICS positions allows a distinction to be made between the administrative position and rank of the individual and the ICS position. This allows for filling ICS positions with the most qualified individuals rather than by rank.
- The lack of standardization of position titles can also confuse the ordering process when requesting qualified personnel. For example, when ordering personnel to fill unit positions, common titles and associated qualifications ensure that qualified personnel will be acquired.

Personnel Accountability Procedures: Summary

Accountability is a key ICS element. Accountability ensures cost-effective use of resources and improved personnel safety. Several procedures within ICS ensure personnel accountability, including:

- **Check-In:** All personnel must check in upon arrival at an incident. **Check in only once!**
- **Unity of Command:** Everybody has only one supervisor.
- **Resource Status:** The Resources Unit maintains status of all incident resources.
- **Assignment Lists:** Division/Group Assignment Lists identify resources with active assignments in the Operations Section.
- **Unit Logs**: Unit Logs record personnel assigned and major events in all ICS organizational elements.

Personnel Accountability

A large percentage of responder injuries and deaths can be directly attributed to a failure in personnel accountability.

While the Resources Unit in Planning tracks resources assigned to the incident, resource tracking is also taking place in Operations. The Resources Unit, unless operating on the scene of a small incident, is unlikely to be able to track the movement of resources into and out of a rapidly changing "hot zone." Resource tracking at this level is the responsibility of the Division/Group Supervisors, Branch Directors, or whoever has first-level supervisory responsibility for the resource.

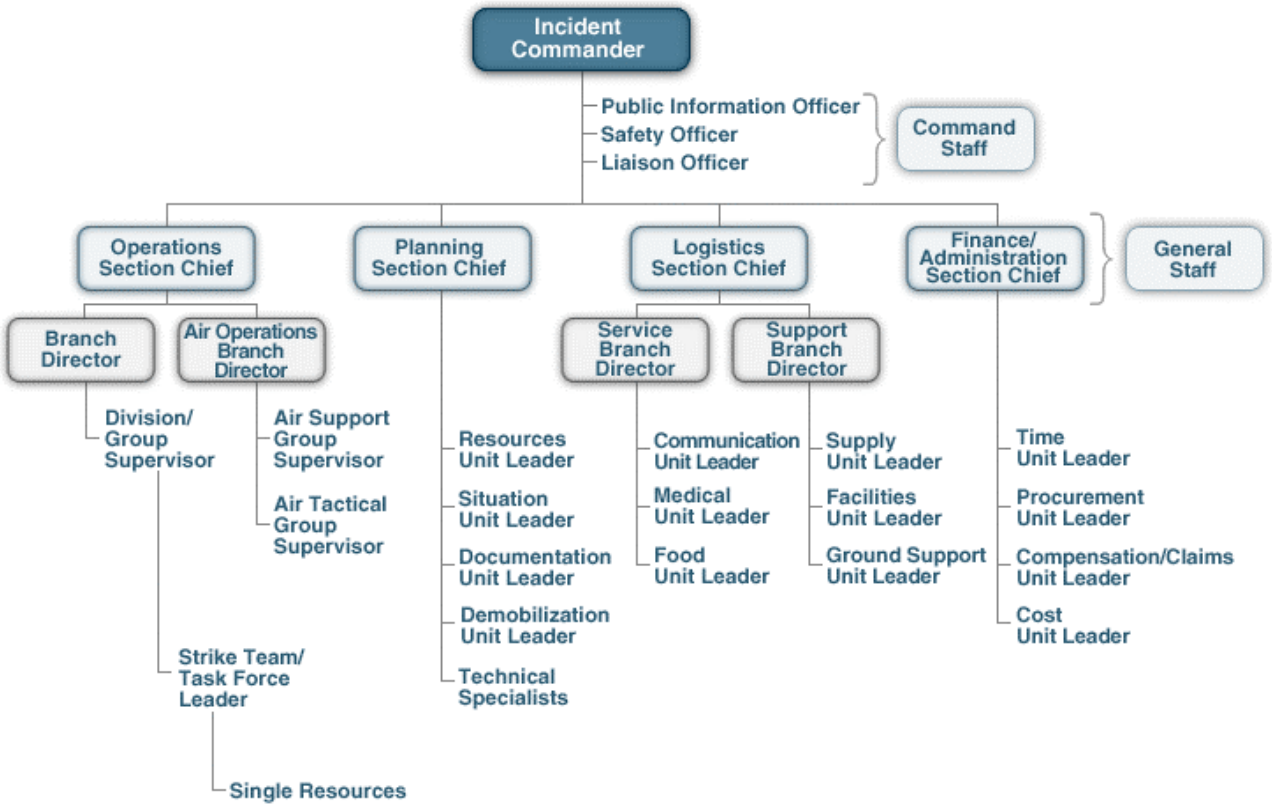
ICS Organizational Chart: Summary

The ICS organizational chart is a graphic representation of the incident, including:

- Positions and functions activated.
- Chain of command.
- Reporting relationships.
- Responsibilities delegated.
- Information flow.

Standardization of the organizational chart and terms does not limit its flexibility. A key principle of ICS is its flexibility. The ICS organization may be expanded easily from a very small operation for routine incidents into a larger organization capable of handling catastrophic events.

ICS Organizational Chart



ICS 200 – Incident Command System

Key Organizational Terms

Incident Commander: The Incident Commander is the individual responsible for overall management of the incident.

Command Staff: The Command Staff consists of the Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer. They report directly to the Incident Commander.

Officer: Officer is the ICS title for the personnel responsible for the Command Staff positions of Safety, Liaison, and Information.

General Staff: The General Staff are assigned functional authority for Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration. The General Staff also report directly to the Incident Commander.

Section: A Section is the organizational level with responsibility for a major functional area of the incident (e.g., Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration).

Section Chief: Chief is the ICS title for individuals responsible for functional sections: Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration

Branch: A Branch is the organizational level having functional or geographic responsibility for major parts of the Operations or Logistics functions.

Branch Director: Branch Director is the ICS title for individuals responsible for supervision of a Branch.

Division/Group: Divisions are used to divide an incident geographically. Groups are used to divide an incident functionally.

Division/Group Supervisor: Supervisor is the ICS title for individuals responsible for a Division or Group.

Strike Team: A Strike Team is a specified combination of the same kind and type of resources with common communications and a Leader.

Task Force: A Task Force is a combination of single resources assembled for a particular tactical need with common communications and a Leader.

Unit: A Unit is the organizational element having functional responsibility for a specific incident planning, logistical, or financial activity.

Task Force/Strike Team/Unit Leader: Leader is the ICS title for an individual responsible for a Task Force, Strike Team, or functional Unit.

Resources: Resources are personnel and equipment available, or potentially available, for assignment to incidents. Resources may be described by kind and type (e.g., ground, water, air, etc.) and may be used in tactical, support, or overhead capacities at an incident.

Organizing the Incident Command: Summary

As you know, the Incident Commander has the overall responsibility for the management of the incident. Even if other functions are not filled, an Incident Commander will always be designated.

After establishing command, the Incident Commander will consult with Agency Administrators to determine the type of command that is required for the incident. The Incident Commander will then identify the initial organization and staffing for the incident.

Expanding the Sections: Summary

There are no hard and fast rules for expanding the ICS organization. Experienced Incident Commanders can predict workloads and potential staffing needs, regardless of the kind of incident.

As the Operations Section expands, the Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration Sections must expand to support it. It is common for organizations to need one support person for every three people in Operations. While the organization expands, an effective span of control must be maintained.

Deputies

The Incident Commander may have one or more deputies. An individual assuming a deputy role must be equally capable of assuming the primary role. Therefore, a Deputy Incident Commander must be able to assume the Incident Commander's role.

Following are three reasons to designate deputies:

- To perform specific tasks as requested by the Incident Commander.
- To perform the Incident Command function in a relief capacity (e.g., to take over the next operational period).
- To represent an assisting agency that may share jurisdiction or have jurisdiction in the future.

Command Staff

Public Information Officer: Serves as the conduit for information to internal and external stakeholders including the media, or other organizations seeking information directly from the incident or event.

Safety Officer: Monitors safety conditions and develops measures for assuring the safety of all assigned personnel.

Liaison Officer: Serves as the primary contact for supporting agencies assigned to an incident.

General Staff

Operations Section

The Operations function is where the tactical fieldwork is done and most incident resources are assigned to it. The Operations Section Chief will develop and manage the Operations Section to accomplish the incident objectives set by the Incident Commander. The Operations Section Chief is normally the person with the greatest technical and tactical expertise in dealing with the problem at hand.

Planning Section

The major activities of the Planning Section may include:

- Collecting, evaluating, and displaying intelligence and information about the incident.
- Preparing and documenting Incident Action Plans.
- Conducting long-range and/or contingency planning.
- Developing plans for demobilization as the incident winds down.
- Maintaining incident documentation.
- Tracking resources assigned to the incident.

Logistics Section

The Logistics Section is responsible for all of the services and support needs of an incident, including:

- Obtaining and maintaining essential personnel, equipment, and supplies.
- Providing communication planning and resources.
- Setting up food services.
- Setting up and maintaining incident facilities.
- Providing transportation.
- Providing medical services to incident personnel.

Finance/Administration Section

The Finance/Administration Section is set up for any incident that requires incident-specific financial management. The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for:

- Contract negotiation and monitoring.
- Timekeeping.
- Cost analysis.
- Compensation for injury or damage to property.

Branches

If the number of Divisions or Groups exceeds the span of control, it may be necessary to establish another level of organization, called a Branch, within the Operations Section. The person in charge of each Branch is designated as a Director. Deputies may also be used at the branch level.

While span of control is a common reason to establish Branches, Branches are also used on multidiscipline and multijurisdictional incidents.

Divisions

Divisions are a common method of organizing tactical operations at an incident. Divisions **always** refer to geographically defined areas (e.g., the area around a stadium, the inside or floors of a building, or individual plants or facilities).

Divisions are managed by Division Supervisors. Division Supervisors do not have deputy positions.

Groups

Another common method of organizing operations at an incident is to establish functional Groups. As the name implies, this form of organization deals not with geographic areas, but with functional activity.

Groups, like Divisions, are managed by Supervisors. There are no Group Supervisor deputy positions.

Divisions and Groups work at the same level in the organization. Divisions do not work for Groups, or vice versa.

Demobilization: Summary

Demobilization planning starts at the very beginning of the incident. The complexity of the demobilization process is based on the needs of the incident. Personnel begin demobilizing when their objectives have been achieved. Then personnel will be released according to the demobilization plan.

Taking the Posttest

You should now be ready to take the ICS 200 posttest. The purpose of the test is to make sure that you have learned the course content. The posttest includes 25 multiple-choice items. To receive credit for this course, you must answer 70% of the questions correctly.

Tips for Taking the Posttest

- Review the printable version of this course. You may refer to your notes and materials printed from this course.
- When you are ready, begin the test by reading the directions carefully.
- Read each question and then review ALL possible answers before selecting one. Do **NOT** click on the first answer that looks good! Click on the single best answer from the options presented.
- Answer every test item. If you do not know the answer, review your reference materials.
- Review your work. Before clicking on the Submit button, check your answers.